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Fairytales &

Household stories

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GRIMMS' FAIRY TALES
AND
HOUSEHOLD STORIES

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Novels. 3



THE GOOSE GIRL.

See p. 173.

GRIMMS' FAIRY TALES

AND

HOUSEHOLD STORIES

Translated from the German

BY

MRS H. B. PAULL AND MR. L. A. WHEATLEY



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PREFACE.

THE celebrated Household Stories or Fairy Tales, collected by the brothers Grimm, have a peculiar interest as originating amongst the people, and having been transmitted orally for many centuries. They were collected chiefly in Hesse and Hanau, during a careful search of thirteen years, by the Grimms, and were published by them in 1812; at least, the first collection was. In 1814 a second collection appeared, and many editions of them have since followed.

The tales are full of incident and wonderful adventures; and the hair-breadth escapes from danger of the heroes and heroines are not always attributed to supernatural causes, but often to their own kindness or courage.

The stories are highly imaginative, and the characters introduced display a spirit of enterprise which reminds us of the warlike heroes of this ancient Fatherland, who were

the founders of two of the greatest empires of modern Europe.

The translators have been most careful to preserve the sense of the original text, and at the same time to render the English phraseology simple and pure both in style and tendency.

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GRIMMS' FAIRY TALES.

THE FROG PRINCE.

IN olden times, when people could have all they wished, lived a king who had beautiful daughters; but the youngest was so lovely that the sun himself would wonder whenever he shone on her face. Near to the king's castle lay a dark, gloomy forest, in the midst of which stood an old linden-tree, and under it was a spring.

One day, when the weather was very hot, the king's daughter went into the forest, seated herself on the side of the cool fountain, and began to toss a golden ball in the air, and catch it again, as an amusement. Presently, however, she failed to catch the golden ball in her hand; it fell on the ground, and rolled over the grass into the water.

The princess followed it with her eyes, but it disappeared, for the water was so deep that she could not see the bottom.

Then she cried, and began to weep bitterly. Presently she heard a voice saying:

'Why do you weep, O king's daughter? Your tears could make even a stone pity you!'

She looked at the spot from whence the voice came, and saw a frog stretching his thick ugly head out of the water.

THE FROG PRINCE.

'Oh, there you are, old water-paddler,' she said. 'Well, then, I am crying for the loss of my golden ball that has fallen into the spring.'

'Then weep no more,' answered the frog; 'I can get it for you. But what will you give me if I fetch your plaything?'

'Oh! anything you like, dear frog,' she replied. 'What will you have—my dresses, my pearls and jewels, or the golden crown I wear?'

'Your clothes,' answered the frog, 'your pearls and your jewels, or even your golden crown, are nothing to me. I want you to love me, and let me be your companion and playfellow. I should like to sit at your table, eat from your golden plate. I should like to drink out of your cup, and sleep in your little bed. If you will promise me this, then I will dive down into the water and bring up your pretty golden ball.'

'Oh yes,' she replied. 'I will promise you anything you like if you will only bring up my ball again.'

But she thought to herself that a silly, chattering frog, such as he was, living in the water with others like himself, and croaking, could not be a companion for her.

The frog, having received the promise, dipped his head under the water, and sank down to the bottom, where he found the ball, brought it back in his mouth, and threw it on the grass. When the king's daughter saw the beautiful plaything, she was full of joy, and, catching it up, ran away with it.

'Wait, wait,' cried the frog, 'take me with you; I cannot run as fast as you can.' But the young princess would not listen to the frog's croaking; she got to the house as fast as she could, and soon forgot the poor frog, who was obliged to return to the fountain.

The next day, however, while the princess was sitting with the king and his courtiers, and eating out of her own little golden plate, there came a strange noise on the marble steps, splash, splash, splash, splash, and then a knock at the door, and a voice cried, 'Lovely princess, open the door for me.'

So she went to see who could be outside. There was the frog. She closed the door hastily and seated herself again at the table, looking quite pale. The king, seeing that his daughter was alarmed, said, 'My child, what is there at the door—is it a giant come to carry you away?'

'Oh no, my father,' she replied, 'it is no giant—only a great ugly frog.'

'A frog! What can he want with you?'

'Ah, dear father, yesterday, when I was playing with my golden ball in the forest, sitting by the spring, I let it fall into the water, and because I cried, the frog brought it out for me, and because he wished it I promised that he should be my companion, for I thought he could not get out of the water to come to me, and now here he is.'

Just then came a second knock at the door, and a voice cried :

'King's daughter, king's daughter, open for me ;
You promised that I your companion should be,
When you sat in the shade from the sun's bright beam,
And I fetched up your ball from the fountain's cool stream.'

Then said the king, 'You must keep your promise; go and get him in.' So she was obliged to go and open the door, and the frog hopped in after her, close to her feet and up to her hair. But when she sat down he cried, 'Take me up by your arm.' She would not at first, till her father ordered her to do so. He was no sooner there than he jumped upon the table and said, 'Now, then, push your little golden plate nearer, and we will eat together.' The princess did as he told her, but everyone could see how much she disliked it. The frog seemed to relish his dinner very much, but at last he said, 'I have eaten and drunk quite enough, and I feel very tired; carry me up the stairs into your little bedroom, and make your silken bed ready, that we may sleep together.'

When the princess heard this she began to weep, for she was really afraid of the cold frog; she could not even touch

him, and now he actually wanted to sleep in her neat, comfortable little bed.

But the king was displeased at her tears, and he said, 'who helped you when you were in trouble must not be despised now.' So the young princess found she must obey. Then she took up the frog with two fingers, and carried him upstairs and placed him in a corner of her room.

In the evening, however, as soon as the princess was in bed, the frog crept out of his corner and said to her, 'I am so tired, lift me up, and let me sleep in your bed, or I will tell your father.'

On hearing this, the princess fell into a great panic. Seizing the frog in her hand, she dashed him with all her strength against the wall, saying, 'You will be quiet now, or I will hope, you ugly frog!'

But as he fell, the frog changed into a handsome prince, with beautiful friendly eyes, who, with her father's consent, became her constant companion and husband.

Then the prince told her his history—how he had changed into a frog by a wicked witch, and that no one could have released him but herself, and that on the next day they would go to his kingdom.

The next day a splendid carriage, drawn by eight white horses, drove up to the door. They had white feathers on their heads, and golden harness, and by the side of the carriage stood the prince's steward, the faithful Harry. The faithful Harry had been so unhappy when his master changed into a frog, that he had fastened three iron bands round his heart, to prevent it from bursting with sorrow.

The carriage, with the prince and his bride, soon drove away, with Harry behind in his old place, and full of joy at the release of his master. They had not travelled far when they heard a loud crack, as if something had broken.

Now, the prince knew nothing of the iron bands round his heart.

servant's heart, so he cried out, 'Harry, is the carriage breaking?'

'No, sire,' he replied, 'only the iron bands which I bound round my heart, for fear it should burst with sorrow while you were a frog confined to the fountain. They are breaking now because I am so happy to see my master restored to his own shape, and travelling to his kingdom with a beautiful bride.'

THE WOLF AND THE SEVEN YOUNG KIDS.

THERE was once an old goat who had seven young ones, and she loved them as much as any mother could love her children.

One day she wished to go into the forest and get food for them, so she called them to her and said, 'Dear children, I am going out into the wood. Don't open the door while I am away, for if the wolf should get into our hut, the wicked, deceitful creature will eat you up, even to the very hairs: you may easily know him by his rough voice and his black feet.'

'Dear mother,' said the young kids, 'we will be very careful to keep out the wolf; you may leave us without the least anxiety.' So the old goat bleated, and started on her way comforted.

She had not been absent long, when there came a knock at the door, and a voice cried, 'Open the door, my dear children; I have brought something nice for each of you.'

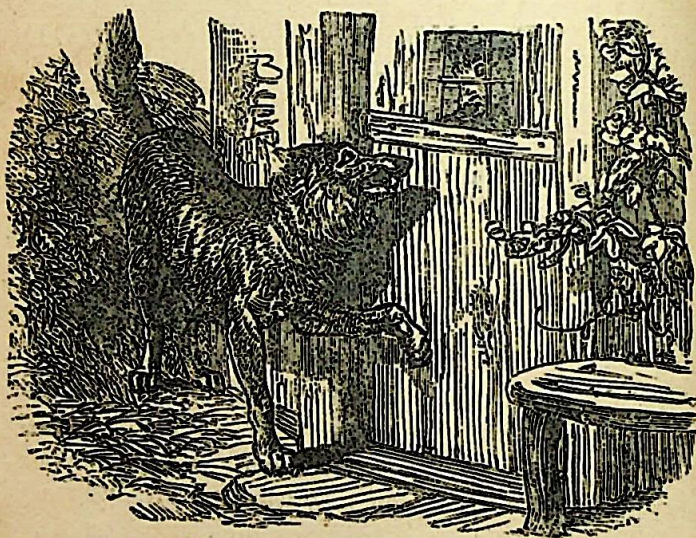
But the young kids knew by the rough voice that it was the old wolf, and not their mother; so the eldest said, 'We shall not open the door; you are not our mother—she has a soft and gentle voice, and your voice is rough. You are the wolf.'

Then the wolf ran away to a shop at some distance, and

bought a great stick of white chalk, which he ate to make his voice soft. After he had eaten it, he went back to the goat cottage, and knocked again at the door, and said in a soft voice, 'Open the door for me now, dear children; I am your mother, and I have something nice for each of you.'

But the wolf put his foot on the window-sill as he spoke and looked into the room; the young kids saw it, and one of them said, 'No! we shall not open the door. Our mother has no black feet like that; go away, you are the wolf.'

So the wolf went away again to a baker's, and said, 'Bake



'OPEN THE DOOR, MY DEAR CHILDREN.'

I have crushed my foot; please to wrap it in dough, that will soon cure it.' And as soon as the baker had done this, he went off to the miller and asked him to cover his foot with flour. The miller was too frightened to refuse, so he floured the wolf's foot and sent him away. Such is the way of the world.

Now went the wicked animal for the third time to the house-door, and said, 'Open the door, dear children, it is your mother; she has brought you something from the forest.'

'Show us your feet,' said the little kids, 'then we shall know if you really are our mother.' The wolf placed his white foot on the window, and when they all saw it was white, they believed that what he had said was all true, so they opened the door; but as soon as he entered the house they discovered that it was the wolf, and with screams of terror ran to hide themselves.

One hid under the table, another in the bed, the third in the oven, the fourth in the kitchen, the fifth in the cupboard, the sixth under the wash-tub, and the seventh in the clock-case. But the wolf found six, and, without much ceremony, gobbled them up one after the other, excepting the youngest, who was hidden in the clock-case.

After the wolf had satisfied his greedy appetite, he went out, lazily lay down in the green meadow under a tree, and fell fast asleep.

Not long after the old goat returned home from the forest. Ah! what a scene it was for her—the house-door wide open; table, chairs, and stools upset; the wash-tub broken to pieces, the counterpanes and pillows dragged from the bed. She sought for her children in terror, but not one could she find. At last she heard a little voice cry, 'Dear mother, here I am, shut up in the clock-case.' The old goat helped her kid out, who told her how the wolf had come into the hut and eaten up her brothers and sisters. We can guess how the poor mother mourned and wept for her children. At last she went out, and the little kid followed her. As they crossed the meadow, they saw the wolf lying under a tree, and snoring so loud that the branches shook.

The goat examined him on all sides, and saw a movement as something were alive in his stomach. 'Ah!' thought she, 'he only swallowed my dear children, they must be still alive.' So she sent the little kid into the house for a pair of scissors, a needle, and some thread, and very quickly began to open the monster's stomach. She had scarcely made one

cut, when a little kid stretched out his head, and then a second, and a third sprang out as she cut farther, till the whole six were safe and alive, jumping around their mother for joy; the monster, in his eagerness, had swallowed them whole, and they were not hurt in the least.

Then their mother said to them, 'Go and fetch me some large pebbles from the brook, that we may fill the stomach of the dreadful creature while he still sleeps.' The seven little kids started off to the brook in great haste, and brought back as many large stones as they could carry. With these they filled the stomach of the wolf; then the old goat sewed it up again so gently and quietly that the wolf neither awoke nor moved.

As soon, however, as he had had his sleep out, he awoke, and, stretching out his legs, felt himself very heavy and uncomfortable, and the great stones in his stomach made him feel so thirsty that he got up and went to the brook to drink. As he trotted along, the stones rattled and knocked one against the other and against his sides in a most strange manner. Then he cried out,

'What a rattle and rumble !
They cannot be bones
Of those nice little kids :
They feel just like stones.'

But when he came to the brook and stooped over to drink, the weight of the stones in his stomach overbalanced him, so that he fell in and was drowned.

The little kids ran to the brook when they saw what happened. Then they danced round their mother for joy, crying out, 'The wolf is dead ! the wolf is dead !'

THE GOOD BARGAIN.

A PEASANT had led his cow to the market, and sold her for seven dollars. On his way home he had to pass a pond, but long before he reached it, he could hear the frogs crying, 'Akt, akt, akt, akt.*'

'Yes, I hear you,' he said; 'but it's seven I have received, not eight.' As soon as he reached the water he exclaimed, 'Stupid creatures that you are, don't you know better? seven dollars are not eight.'

The frogs, taking no heed, continued to cry, 'Akt, akt, akt.'

'Now,' said the peasant, 'if you do not believe me, I can count it out to you,' and he took the money out of his pocket and counted over the seven dollars in seventy-four groschens.

The frogs cared nothing for the peasant's reckoning, but went on croaking, 'Akt, akt, akt, akt.'

'Oh!' cried the peasant in a rage, 'do you know better how to count than I do?' and he threw the money into the water, right in the midst of them. Then he stood and waited till they were ready to return his property to him, but the frogs were constant to their first opinion, and screamed out still louder, 'Akt, akt, akt, akt,' and did not attempt to throw the money back again to him.

He waited for a good while till evening came on, and he knew he must go home. Then he abused the frogs and cried 'You water-splashers! you thickheads! you blind eyes! with your great jaws you can scream enough to split one's ears, but you cannot count seven dollars; and do you think I am going to stay here and wait till you are ready?' Then he walked away very fast, but he heard the frogs still croaking, 'Akt, akt,' for a long distance, and he arrived home quite out of humour.

* The word 'acht' is German for eight.

After a time he bought another cow, which he slaughtered and while reckoning how much he should get by the sale of the flesh, as well as the skin, he hoped to make a good bargain with profits, even with the loss caused by the obstinacy of the frogs.

So he started off to the town to sell his dead cow, but on arriving at the butcher's stall he saw a pack of hounds, who all surrounded him, barking and smelling at the meat. 'Wass, wass,*' they cried.

'Ah! yes,' said the peasant, 'it's all very well to say, "what, what?" as if you wanted to know what I have got here, and you know it is meat all the while.'

There was no one to watch the butcher's shop but a large house-dog, and the countryman had often heard his master say how true and faithful he was. So he said to him, 'If I leave this meat here, will you answer for these friends of yours that it shan't be touched?' 'Wass, wass,' cried the dog; while the others barked 'Wass, wass,' and sprang at the meat.

'Oh! well,' said the peasant to the butcher's dog, 'as you have promised, I will leave the meat for your master to sell; but, remember, I must have the money in three days, and if he doesn't send it, I shall come for it.' Thereupon he laid the meat down on the counter and turned to go. The dogs all ran round it, barking 'Wass, wass,' and the peasant heard them for a long distance. 'Ah!' he said, 'they are all longing for a piece; but it's all right, the big one is answerable for them.'

Three days passed, and the countryman made himself quite comfortable in the thought of what he was to receive. 'I shall have plenty of money in my pocket by to-morrow evening,' he said, in a contented tone.

But the morrow came and no money. He waited two days, and then said, 'I can't stand this; I must go and demand my money.' The butcher at first thought he was joking.

'Joking, indeed!' replied the peasant. 'I want my money.'

* The German 'wass' is translated 'what.' It is used instead of 'wow' for the bark of a dog.

for the meat I left under the care of your great dog three days ago—the flesh of a whole cow.’

At this the butcher flew in a rage, and, seizing a broom, drove him out of the shop.

‘Just wait,’ cried the peasant; ‘there is some justice after all left in the world.’ And away he went to the castle, and begged an audience. He was led before the king, who sat with his daughter by his side.

‘What is your trouble?’ asked the king.

‘Alas! your majesty,’ he replied, ‘the frogs and the dogs have taken all I possess, and when I asked the butcher for my money, he beat me with a broomstick;’ and then he related in a confused manner all that had occurred.

The king’s daughter burst into a fit of laughter, and the king said, ‘I cannot restore to you the money you have lost, but I can give you my daughter in marriage. She has never, during her whole life, laughed till now. I long ago promised her as a wife to the first man who could make her laugh, and you are that man, so you may thank heaven for your good fortune.’

‘Ah! my lord king,’ replied the peasant, ‘I cannot marry the princess. I have one wife at home already, and she is quite too much for me to manage; there is no room for another in our chimney-corner.’

Then was the king angry, and said, ‘You are a rude clown.’

‘Ah! my lord king,’ he replied, ‘what can you expect from a pig but a grunt?’ and he turned to go.

‘Stay!’ cried the king, calling him back; ‘I mean you to have some reward. Five hundred shall be ready for you if you come here again in three days.’

The peasant looked so joyful as he passed out, after hearing this, that the sentinel asked him the cause. ‘You have made the princess laugh, I hear. What reward are you to have?’

‘Five hundred dollars,’ he replied.

‘Why, what will you do with all that money?’ asked the sentinel. ‘You may as well give me some.’

THE GOOD BARGAIN.

'I will, if you like,' he said; 'and if you will go to the king in three days, he shall pay you two hundred dollars instead of me,' and away he went.

A Jew, who was standing near, overheard this promise, and running after the peasant, pulled him by the sleeve, and said, 'You are a lucky fellow, friend! I will change it for you in small coins. What do you want with the big thalers?'

'Jew,' replied the peasant, 'three hundred thou canst have. Give it to me at once in coin, and in three days from this thou wilt be paid for it by the king.'

The Jew rejoiced at such profits, and gave such bad coins in the change that three were only equal to two good ones.

At the end of three days, the peasant went to the king according to his command.

'Take off his coat,' said the king; 'he shall have his five hundred.'

'Ah! no,' cried the peasant, 'they do not belong to me. Two hundred I have promised to the sentinel, and I have given a Jew a bill to receive three hundred, as he gave me cash for it, so that I have justly nothing to receive.' While he spoke, in came the soldier and the Jew, who demanded what they had obtained from the peasant; and they received it in blows, strictly counted out. The soldier bore this patiently—he knew how they felt; but the Jew said sorrowfully, 'Alas! these are heavy thalers.'

The king could not help laughing at the countryman's folly. 'So,' he said to the peasant, 'as you have been so foolish as to give up your money before it even belonged to you, I suppose I must make you some compensation. Go into that room opposite, and help yourself to as much money as your pockets will hold.' The countryman did not require to be told twice; he went as he was told, and filled his wide pockets to overflowing.

Away he started to the inn to count his money, and the Jew sneaked after him, and heard him talking to himself. 'Now if I had been a knave, and hidden all this from the king,

would never have allowed me to take this money. I wish I knew how much I had. Oh, if the king had only told me what amount I was to take. I'm so afraid I may have taken more than I ought.'



THE PEASANT'S JOYFUL RETURN.

Ah, ah!' muttered the Jew, 'he is grumbling even now, and king disrespectfully of my lord the king. I will run and 'N'm, and then I shall get a reward and he will be punished.' Then the king heard this he was angry, and ordered the

Jew to fetch the ungrateful man again before him. 'The slip must appear before the king immediately,' cried the Jew, 'there must be no excuse.'

'Indeed, I cannot,' he replied; 'who ever heard of a man with such a heap of gold in his pockets as I have, going before the king in such a ragged coat as this?'

The Jew, seeing that the peasant was determined, fearing that the wrath of the king would cool, promised to lend him a coat which was very good and nearly new. 'I will lend it you for true friendship's sake,' he said, 'and that is seldom done in the world.'

So the peasant put it on, and went into the king's presence. But when the king repeated what he had been told by the Jew, the peasant exclaimed, 'Your majesty, it is all false; there is never a true word out of that Jew's mouth. I dare say he will affirm that the coat I have on belongs to him.'

'What do you mean?' screamed the Jew; 'you know it is my coat; I lent it you out of pure friendship, that you might appear before the king.'

When the king heard that, he said, 'The Jew has certainly deceived either me or the peasant, and he ordered him some more blows.'

The peasant went home joyfully to count the gold in his pockets, and said to himself, 'This time, at least, I have made a good bargain.'

THE WONDERFUL MUSICIAN.

THERE was once a wonderful musician who went quite far through a forest, and thought of all manner of things when he had nothing else to think of, he said, 'I am so lonely by myself; I will bring myself a good companion.'

he slipped his violin from his shoulder and commenced playing so merrily that it echoed through the wood.

Before long a wolf came out of the thicket and trotted towards him. 'Ah! here comes a wolf,' he exclaimed, 'but I don't want him.'

But the wolf stepped nearer and said, 'Dear musician, how beautifully you play! I wish I could learn.'

'You could learn quickly,' replied the fiddler, 'if you will do all I tell you.'

'Oh, musician,' said the wolf, 'I will obey you in everything, as a scholar should his master.'

'Come along, then,' said the musician.

They had not gone far when they came to a hollow oak-tree which was cleft in the middle. 'See,' cried the fiddler, 'if you wish to learn to fiddle, put your two fore-feet in there.' The wolf obeyed, and the fiddler with a stone quickly wedged the feet of the wolf in the tree so fast that he could not move, and found himself a prisoner. 'Stay there till I come back,' said the musician, and went his way.

After wandering on for some distance, he again began to murmur to himself, 'I am still all alone in the wood; I must try to find another partner.' So he took down his violin and played, and presently a fox came creeping through the tree. 'Ah! here comes a fox,' said the fiddler, 'but I have no wish for his society.'

'What beautiful music!' exclaimed the fox. 'I should like to be able to play like you.'

'There is no difficulty,' answered the fiddler, 'if you will do as I tell you.'

'Oh, musician,' he replied, 'I will obey you as a scholar obeys his master.'

'Follow me, then,' said the fiddler. So they walked on together till they came out upon a pathway on each side of which grew high shrubs.

The fiddler stopped, and bending down a branch of one of

these shrubs to the ground, placed his foot on it. Then he took a branch on the other side of the path and also stood on it, He said, 'Come, little foxey, give me your left fore-foot.' baster When the fox obeyed, and the fiddler tied it to a branch on the left, Bro' ne.' he said, 'Now give me the right foot also.' The fox, remembering he had promised to obey, did as he was told, and the fiddler tied this foot also to the branch on the right. Then, they seeing that the knots were tight, the fiddler lifted his feet, and discovered the branches free. Up they sprung, carrying the fox, and t them suspended across the pathway from the boughs, Bu struggling as he hung. 'Wait till I return,' said the fiddler, th and away he went. oblig

Again he began to feel lonely, and taking down his violin, he began to play; and as the sound echoed through the wood, cent 'A said, 'Oh, if I only had a companion!' it w

In a few minutes a hare appeared. 'Here comes a hare,' He cried the fiddler. 'I don't want him.' ho

'Ah, dear musician,' said the hare, 'how sweetly you play, Polf, I wish I could learn.' isch

'There is nothing so very difficult to learn,' cried He musician, 'if you will only do as I tell you.' itte

'Oh, fiddler,' answered the hare, 'only teach me; I will re you as a scholar does his master.' So they walked on toget At for some distance, till they came to a clear place in the e f where an aspen-tree grew. 3 w

The fiddler then took a long string, and tying one end loosely round the hare's neck, fastened the other end to a tree, and said, 'Brisk little hare, run twenty times round the tree.' The hare obeyed, but by the time she had made ten runs, the string was so firmly wound round the stem that it could not move without cutting her soft neck with the. HE

'Stay there till I come back,' said the musician, and he went on his way. I

In the meantime the wolf had struggled hard to release the feet from the stone. ug te

He succeeded at last, and then, full of anger and rage, hastened after the fiddler, determined to tear him in pieces. When the fox saw him running, he began to lament and cry, 'Brother wolf, do come to my help; the fiddler has betrayed me.' At this appeal the wolf stopped, drew the branches down, untied the string with his teeth, and set the fox free. They both started off together, determined on revenge. They discovered the imprisoned hare, whom they quickly set free, and then the three started together to find their enemy.

But the fiddler had attracted another by his music; the tones the violin reached the ears of a poor woodcutter, who was obliged to leave off work, and taking his axe under his arm, he went to meet the fiddler.

'At last here comes the right companion for me,' he cried. 'It was a man I wanted, not wild beasts.'

He played his sweetest notes to please the poor woodcutter, who listened to the sounds as if bewitched, when up came the wolf, the fox, and the hare, and he saw that they were set on mischief.

He placed himself before the musician, and raising his glittering axe, exclaimed, 'If you attempt to harm him, take care of yourselves, that's all; you have me to deal with now.'

At this the animals in alarm ran back into the wood, and the fiddler played him one more tune as thanks and went on his way.

THE TWELVE BROTHERS.

THERE were once a king and queen who had twelve children—boys. Now, one day the king told his wife that if a daughter should be born, all the sons must die—that their father alone might inherit his kingdom and riches.

So the king had twelve coffins made, which were filled with shavings, and in each was the little pillow for the dead. He had them locked up in a private room, the key of which he gave to the queen, praying her not to speak of it to anyone. The poor mother was so unhappy that she wept for a whole day and looked so sad that her youngest son noticed it.

He had the Bible name of Benjamin, and was always called Benjamin his mother.

'Dear mother,' he said, 'why are you so sorrowful?'

'My child, I may not tell you,' she replied; but she allowed her no rest till she unlocked the door of the private room, and showed him the twelve coffins filled with shavings.

'Dearest Benjamin,' she said, 'these coffins are for you and your brothers; for if you should ever have a little sister, she will all die, and be buried in them.'

She wept bitterly as she told him, but her son comforted her and said, 'Do not weep, dear mother. We will take care of ourselves, and go far away.'

Then she took courage, and said, 'Yes, go away with your eleven brothers, and remain in the forest; and let one climb a high tree, from whence he will be able to see the tower of the castle. If I should have a son, a white flag shall be hoisted, and then you may return home; but if you see a red flag, you will know it is a girl, and then hasten away as fast as you can, and may Heaven protect you! Every night I will pray for you that you may not suffer from the cold in winter or the heat in summer.'

Then she blessed all her sons, and they went away into the forest, while each in turn mounted a high tree daily, to wait for the flag on the tower.

Eleven days passed, and it was Benjamin's turn to watch. He saw the flag hoisted, and it was red—the signal that they must die. The brothers were angry, and said, 'Shall we suffer death on account of a maiden? When we find one we will kill her, to avenge ourselves.'

They went still farther into the forest, and came upon a most pleasant little cottage, which was uninhabited. 'We will make this our home,' they said; 'and, Benjamin, as you are the youngest and weakest, you shall stay at home and keep house, while we go out and procure food.'

So they wandered about the forest, shooting hares, wild rabbits, pigeons and other birds, which they brought to Benjamin to prepare for food. In this cottage they lived for ten years happily together, so that the time passed quickly.

Their little sister was growing a great girl. She had a sweet disposition, and was very beautiful to look upon. She wore rich clothes, and a golden star on her forehead.

One day, when she was about ten years old, she discovered in her mother's wardrobe twelve shirts. 'Mother,' she exclaimed, 'whose shirts are these? They are much too small for my father.'

The queen sighed as she replied, 'Dear child, these shirts are made for your twelve brothers.'

'Twelve brothers!' cried the little maiden. 'Where are they? I have not even heard of them.'

'Heaven knows where they are,' was the reply; 'but they are somewhere about the world somewhere.' Then the queen took her little daughter to the private room in the castle, and showed her the twelve coffins which had been prepared for her brothers, and related to her, with many tears, why they had died for her.

'Dear mother,' said the child, 'do not weep. I will go and find my brothers.' So she took the twelve shirts with her, and wandered away into the forest.

She walked for a whole day, and in the evening came to a forest, stepped in, and found a young boy, who stared with astonishment at seeing a beautiful little girl dressed in rich clothes and wearing a golden star on her forehead.

'At last he said, 'Who are you, and what do you want?'

'I am a king's daughter,' she said, 'and I seek my twelve

The next evening he went to the nursery, and in the middle of the night the queen appeared and said :

'How is my child ? how is my roe ?
Now come I but once, and then no moe,'

and nursed the child, as was her wont, before she left.

The king did not trust himself to speak to her, but waited again the following night. She again said :

'How is my child ? how is my roe ?
Now come I this time, and then no moe.'

The king could not restrain himself, but sprang to her and said, 'You can be no one but my own dear wife.'

She answered, 'Yes, I am thy dear wife,' and at the same time, by God's grace, she received back her life, and was again healthy. Then she told the king how cruelly she had been treated by her stepmother, and on hearing this he became angry, and had the witch and her daughter brought to justice. They were both sentenced to die—the daughter to be devoured by wild beasts, and the mother to be burnt alive.

No sooner, however, was she reduced to ashes, than the charm which held the queen's brother in the form of a serpent was broken ; he recovered his own natural shape, and appeared before them a tall, handsome young man.

After this, the brother and sister lived happily and peacefully for the rest of their lives.

RAPUNZEL.

THERE were once a man and a woman who wished very much to have a little child. Now, these people had a small cottage in their cottage which looked out into a beautiful garden of the most lovely flowers and vegetables. There was a high wall round it, but even had there not been, no one would have

ventured to enter the garden, because it belonged to a sorceress, whose power was so great that everyone feared her.

One day the woman stood at the window looking into the garden, and she saw a bed which was planted full of most beautiful lettuces. As she looked at them, she began to wish she had some to eat, but she could not ask for them.

Day after day her wish for these lettuces grew stronger, and the knowledge that she could not get them so worried her, that at last she became pale and thin, and her husband was quite alarmed. 'What is the matter with you, dear wife?' he asked one day.

'Ah!' she said, 'if I do not have some of that nice lettuce which grows in the garden behind our house, I feel that I shall die.'

The husband, who loved his wife dearly, said to himself, 'Rather than my wife should die, I will get some of this lettuce for her, cost what it may.'

So in the evening twilight he climbed over the wall into the garden of the witch, hastily gathered a handful of the lettuces, and brought them to his wife. She made them into a salad, and ate it with great eagerness.

It pleased her so much and tasted so good, that her desire became three times as great, and she gave her husband no rest till he promised to get her some more. So again in the evening twilight he climbed the wall, but as he slid down into the garden on the other side he was terribly alarmed at seeing the witch standing near him. 'How came you here?' she said, with a fierce look. 'You have climbed over the wall into my garden like a thief, and stolen my lettuces. You shall pay early for this.'

'Ah!' replied the poor man, 'let me entreat for mercy. I have only taken it in a case of need. My wife has seen your lettuces from her window, and she wished for them so much that she said she should die if she could not have some of them to eat.'

Then the witch's anger cooled a little, and she replied what you tell me is true, then I will give you full permission to take as many lettuces as you like, on one condition. You must give me the child which your wife may bring into the world. I will be very kind to it, and be as careful of it as its mother could be.'

The husband in his alarm promised everything; and so the wife became the mother of a girl, the witch appeared, took the child the name of Rapunzel, and took it away with her.

Rapunzel was the most beautiful child under the sun, and soon as she reached the age of twelve years, the witch took her up in a tower that stood in a forest, and this tower had no steps, nor any entrance, excepting a little window. When the witch wished to visit Rapunzel, she would place herself at this window and sing:

'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair,
That I may climb without a stair.'

Rapunzel had most long and beautiful hair like spun gold, and when she heard the voice of the witch she would let down her golden locks and let them fall loose over the window from which they hung down to such a length that the witch could draw herself up by them into the tower.

A few years passed in this manner, when it happened one day that the king's son rode through the forest. When he was riding near the tower, he heard a lovely song, and could not stop to listen. It was Rapunzel, who tried to lighten her solitude by the sound of her own sweet voice.

The king's son was very eager to obtain a glimpse of the singer, but he sought in vain for a door to the tower, for there was not one to be found.

So he rode home, but the song had made such an impression on his heart that he went daily into the forest to listen. One day while he stood behind a tree, he saw the witch approach the tower and heard her say:

'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair,
That I may climb without a stair.'

Presently he saw a quantity of long golden hair hanging down low over the window-sill, and the witch climbing up it.

'Oh,' said the young prince, 'if that is the ladder on which persons can mount and enter, I will take the first opportunity of trying my luck that way.' So on the following day, as it began to grow dark, he placed himself under the window and said:

'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair,
That I may climb instead of a stair.'

Immediately the hair fell over the window, and the young prince quickly climbed up and entered the room where the maiden lived.

Rapunzel was dreadfully frightened at seeing a strange man come into the room, as she had never seen one before; but the king's son looked at her with such friendly eyes, and began to converse with her so kindly, that she soon lost all fear.

He told her that he had heard her singing, and that her song had excited such deep emotion in his heart that he could not rest till he had seen her. On hearing this, Rapunzel ceased to fear him. The prince asked her if she would take him for a husband. For a time she hesitated, although she knew that he was young and handsome, and he had told her that he was a prince. At last she said to herself, 'He will certainly love me better than old Mother Grethel does.' So she placed her hand in his and said, 'I would willingly go with you and your wife, but I do not know in the least how to get away from this place. Unless,' she said, after a pause, 'you will bring me every day some strong silk cord, then I will weave a ladder of it; and when it is finished I will descend upon it, and you shall take me away on your horse.'

The prince promised to come and see her every evening till

the ladder was finished, for the old witch always came in daytime.

The witch had never seen the prince; she knew nothing of his visits, till one day Rapunzel said innocently, 'How that you are so much heavier to draw up, Mother Grethel the king's son, who has just left me?'

'You wicked child,' cried the witch, 'what do I hear say? I thought I had hidden you from all the world, and you have betrayed me.' In her wrath she caught hold of Rapunzel's beautiful hair, and wound it several times round her left hand. Then she seized a pair of scissors and cut Rapunzel's hair, while the beautiful locks, glistening like gold, fell on the ground. And she was so hard-hearted afterwards that she dragged poor Rapunzel to a wild and desert place and left her there in sorrow and woe.

On the same day on which the poor maiden had been so treated, the witch tied the locks of hair which she had cut off Rapunzel's golden head into a kind of tail, and hung it from the window-sill.

In the evening the prince came and cried:

'Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair,
That I may climb without a stair.'

Then the witch let the hair down, and the prince climbed up; but at the open window he found not Rapunzel, but a wicked witch, who looked at him with evil and malicious eyes.

'Ah!' she cried, with a sneer; 'you are come to fetch your loving bride, I suppose; but the beautiful bird has fled from the nest, and will never sing any more. The cat has run away, and she intends also to scratch your eyes out. Rapunzel is lost; thou wilt never behold her again.'

The prince felt almost out of his mind with grief at this, and in his despair he sprang out of the tower and fell among the thorns and brambles beneath. He escaped.

his life, but the thorns stuck into his eyes and blinded them. After this he wandered about the wood, eating only wild roots and berries, and did nothing but lament and weep for the loss of his beloved bride.

So wandered he for a whole year in misery, till at last he came upon the desert place where Rapunzel had been banished and lived in her sorrow. As he drew near, he heard a voice which he seemed to recognise, and, advancing towards the sound, came within sight of Rapunzel, who recognised him at once with tears. Two of her tears fell on his eyes and healed them. Then he travelled with her to his kingdom, and she became his wife, and the remainder of their days were spent in happiness and content.

THE THREE SPINNING FAIRIES.

THERE was once a girl who was idle and would not spin, and her mother say what she would, nothing would induce her to work. At last the mother became so angry that she gave her a flogging.

At the first blow the girl set up such a loud screaming that the queen, who was passing, stopped to inquire what was the matter; she stepped into the house and said:

'Why are you beating your daughter? Her screams are feared by people in the street.'

Then the mother was ashamed to expose the laziness of her daughter, and said:

'I cannot get her away from the spinning-wheel, and we are too poor to provide her with flax.'

'Oh,' answered the queen, 'there is nothing more pleasant to me than the sound of spinning; the humming of the wheel delights me. Give me your daughter; I will take her to the

castle. I have plenty of flax, and she shall spin as much as she likes.'

The mother was quite glad to allow the queen to take the maiden away with her. As soon as they arrived at the castle the queen took the girl into three rooms that were all full of beautiful flax.

'Spin me this flax,' she said, 'and as soon as it is finished will give you my eldest son for your husband. Although you may be poor, I do not care for that; your unwearied industry is sufficient dowry.'

The maiden was in a fright when she heard this, for she knew she could never spin all that flax if she worked every day from morning till night for a hundred years, and as soon as she was alone she began to cry; at the end of three days when the queen came to see her, she had not begun her work. The queen was surprised, but the maiden excused herself, saying that she felt so unhappy at leaving her mother's lap that she knew not how to begin.

The queen accepted the excuse, but as she left the room she said, 'You had better begin to-morrow.'

When the young girl found herself alone, and knew that she was unable even to begin this task, she rose in her tears and walked to the window. Then she saw three strange-looking women coming towards her. One had a broad forehead, the second such a large under-lip that it hung over her chin, and the third had an enormous thumb.

They remained before the window, looked up at the girl and asked her what was the matter. She told them her story, and they offered to assist her. 'You must first promise us one, that we shall be invited to your wedding, and sit at the table, and you must agree to call us your cousins, without being ashamed of us. If you will do this, we will come in to spin your flax in a short time.'

'I promise, with all my heart,' said the girl. 'So set to work at once!' She let the three strange-looking

in and cleared a space in the first flax chamber, where they seated themselves and commenced spinning.

The first turned the wheel and drew out the thread, another moistened it, while the third twisted it with her finger on the table, and, as she twisted, there fell on the ground skein after skein of the finest spun flax.

The queen came every day to see how the work was getting on, but the maiden hid the three spinners, and showed her each time so many skeins of the finest thread that she went away quite astonished.

When the first room was empty they went to the second, and at last to the third, till all the flax was spun.

Then the three women bade her farewell, saying, 'Don't forget what you have promised, for it will bring you good fortune.'

When the queen came and saw the empty rooms, and the quantity of skeins of thread, she was delighted, and fixed the day on which the marriage was to take place.

The prince felt overjoyed at the prospect of having such a clever and diligent wife, and praised her greatly.

'I have three cousins,' said the girl, 'who have been very kind to me, and I should not like to forget them in the midst of my good fortune. Will you permit me to invite them to the wedding, and to give them seats at our table?'

The queen and the prince both replied that they could have no reason to object. So on the wedding-day the three women came in great pomp and beautifully dressed.

The bride said, 'Welcome, dear cousins.'

'Ah,' said the bridegroom, 'how came you to have such long acquaintances?' Then he went up to them, and addressing the first, he asked, 'How did it happen that you have such a broad foot?'

'From turning the spinning-wheel,' she replied.

He turned away and inquired of the second the cause of her overhanging lip

'From moistening the thread with my lips,' was the reply.

'And your thumb,' he asked of the third, 'what makes in such a size?'

'From drawing and twisting the thread,' she answered.

'Then,' said the bridegroom, 'if this is the result of turn the spinning-wheel, my bride shall never touch it again.'

So the young maiden was set free from spinning.

THE STRAW, THE COAL, AND THE BEAN.

IN a village there lived an old woman, who one day gathered some beans from her garden to cook. She had a good fire on the hearth, but, to make it burn more quickly, she threw each handful of straw. As she threw the beans into the pot to cook, one of them fell on the floor unobserved by the old woman and not far from a wisp of straw which was lying there. Suddenly a glowing coal bounced out of the fire, and fell behind them. They both started away, and exclaimed, 'The friend, don't come near me till you are cooler. What brings you out here?'

'Oh,' replied the coal, 'the heat luckily made me so seen that I was able to bounce from the fire. Had I not done so, my death would have been certain, and I should have been burnt to ashes by this time.'

'Then,' said the bean, 'I have also escaped with a skin; for had the old woman put me in the pot with my comrades, I should without mercy have been boiled in broth.'

'I might have shared the same fate,' said the straw, 'my brothers were pushed into fire and smoke by the old woman. She packed six of us in a bundle, and brought

in here to take away our lives, but luckily I slipped through her fingers.'

'Well, now what shall we do with ourselves?' said the coal. 'I think,' answered the bean, 'as we have been so fortunate as to escape death, we may as well be companions, and travel away together to some more friendly country.'

This proposal was gladly accepted by the two others; so they started on their journey together. After travelling a little distance, they came to a stream, over which there was no bridge of any sort.

Then the straw took courage, and said, 'I will lay myself across the stream, so that you can step over me, as if I were a bridge.'

So the straw stretched himself from one shore to the other, and the coal, who from his nature is rather hot-headed, tripped quite boldly on the newly-built bridge. But when he reached the middle of the stream, and heard the water rushing under him, he was so alarmed that he stood still, and dared not move a step further. The straw began to burn, broke in pieces from its weight, and fell into the brook. The coal, with a hiss, slid after him into the water, and gave up the ghost.

The bean, who had cautiously remained behind on the shore, would not contain herself when she saw what had happened, and laughed so heartily that she burst. Now would she have been in the same plight as her comrades; but, as good luck would have it, a tailor, who was out on his travels, came to rest by the brook, and noticed the bean. He was a kind-hearted man, so he took a needle and thread out of his pocket, and, taking up the bean, sewed her together. She thanked him very much, but unfortunately he had only black thread to sew with, and, in consequence, since that time all beans have a black mark down their backs.

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE.

A FISHERMAN once lived contentedly with his wife in a hut near a lake, and he went every day to fish.

One day the line suddenly sunk to the bottom, and when he pulled it up again, there was a large flounder hanging to the end of it.

'Oh dear!' exclaimed the fish; 'good fisherman, let me go, I pray you; I am not a real fish, but a prince in disguise. I shall be of no use to you, for I am not good to eat; put me back again into the water, and let me swim away.'

'Ah,' said the man, 'you need not make such a disturbance. I would rather let a flounder who can speak swim away than keep it.'

With these words, he placed the fish back again in the water, and it sunk to the bottom, leaving a long streak of blood behind it. Then the fisherman went home to his wife in the hut.

'Husband,' said the wife, 'have you caught any to-day?'

'I caught a flounder,' he replied, 'who said he was an enchanted prince, so I threw him back into the water, and let him swim away.'

'Did you not wish?' she asked.

'No,' he said; 'what should I wish for?'

'Why, at least for a better hut than this. He would have promised you whatever you asked for. However, go and tell him now.'

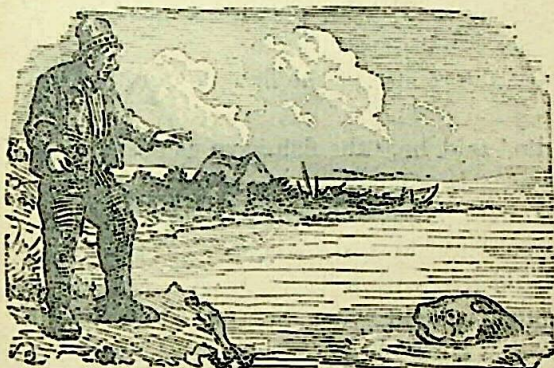
The husband did not like this task; however, to please his wife, he went and stood by the sea. When he saw the sun set and dark it looked he felt much discouraged, but he made a rhyme and said:

'Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
Come, I pray, and talk to me;
For my wife, Dame Isabel,
Sent me here a tale to tell.'

Then the fish came swimming up to the surface, and said,
What do you want, then ?

'Ah,' said the man, 'I caught you and let you go, and my
wife says I ought to have wished, for she cannot live in such a
hut as ours, and she wants a cottage.'

'Go home, man,' said the fish ; 'your wife has all she wants.'
So the husband went home, and there was his wife, on



'FLOUNDER, FLOUNDER, IN THE SEA,
COME, I PRAY, AND TALK TO ME.'

anger in her hovel, but sitting at the door of a neat little
cottage.

She took her husband by the hand, and said, 'Come in, and
see how much better it is.'

So he followed her in, and found a beautiful parlour, and a
bright stove in it, a soft bed in the bedroom, and a kitchen full
of earthenware, and tin and copper vessels for cooking, looking
bright and clean, and all of the very best. Outside was a
pleasant farmyard, with hens and chickens running about; and
beyond, a garden, containing plenty of fruit and vegetables.

'See,' said the wife, 'is it not delightful?'

had cut. On reaching the field he found that none had touched, and Bessie was fast asleep amongst the corn.

Hans went away in great haste and fetched a fowler's bag covered with little bells, which he tied round her; but she continued to sleep. Then he returned home, locked the door, and seated himself to work.

At last when the clever Bess awoke out of her long sleep found it quite dark, she rose to go home, while the bells which hung round her tinkled at every step she took. This alarmed her so much that she began to feel puzzled, and could scarcely tell whether she really was the clever Bess or not.

'Oh dear,' she said, 'am I myself, or am I not?'

She knew not what to answer, and stood a long time in doubt; at last a thought struck her: 'I will go home and ask Hans whether I am really myself or someone else; he is sure to know.'

She found her way home, but when she reached the door of the house it was locked. She knocked at the window and cried:

'Hans, is Bess at home?'

'Yes,' he answered, 'she is at home.' Oh, how frightened she felt as she heard this!

'Oh dear,' she exclaimed; 'then I am not the clever Bess after all.'

Then she went from door to door of the neighbours' houses but when they heard the bells jingling no one would admit her. At last she ran away from the village, and has not been heard of since.

THE WISHING-TABLE, THE GOLD ASS, AND THE CUDGEL.

Once upon a time lived a tailor who had three sons, and only one goat. The goat had to be well fed, and the boys used to take her by turns every day to the meadow. One day the eldest son took her into the churchyard, in which she not only enjoyed the fresh green grass, but frisked about quite merrily. In the evening, when it was time to go home, the boy said to her, 'Have you had enough?' and the goat replied:

'I am so full
I could not pull
Even a blade of grass.
Baa, baa !'

'Then come home,' said the youth; and he took hold of the rope, led her to the stable, and tied her up.

'Well,' said the father, 'has the goat had good fodder?'

'Yes, father; she has eaten till she can eat no more.'

But the father, wishing to make sure, went to the stable himself, and stroking his favourite, said: 'Nanny, have you had enough to-day?' But the goat replied:

In the churchyard all day
I could frisk and play,
But there was not a leaf to eat.
Baa, baa !'

'What do I hear?' cried the tailor, rushing out and calling to his boy. 'You said the goat had eaten as much as she liked, and she has been starved.'

And in great anger he took up the yard measure and drove him with blows from the house.

On the next day it was the turn of the second son to take the goat out, and he soon found a nice spot near a garden wall

full of sweet fresh grass, which the goat ate till there was a blade left.

In the evening, when it was time to go home, the boy asked the goat whether she had had enough.

'I have eaten so much,
I can eat no more.
Baa, baa !'

was the goat's reply, so the boy led her home, and, taking her to the stable, tied her up.

'Well,' said the father, 'how has the goat fared to-day?' 'Ah!' replied the youth, 'she has eaten so much she can eat no more.' But the tailor, remembering the previous evening, went again into the stable, and asked the goat the same question.

'How could I eat
When there was no meat,
Not even a tiny leaf?
Baa, baa !'

'You dreadful child,' cried the tailor, 'to leave such an animal to starve!' He ran to the house, and, after beating the boy with his yard measure, he drove him also from the house.

The turn of the youngest son came the next day, and he determined to give the goat a feast this time. So he took her to a bank where delicious wild-flowers and young leaves grew, and left her to enjoy herself.

When he came to fetch her in the evening, he asked, 'Did you had enough to-day, Nanny?' She replied:

'I am so full
That I could not pull
Even a blade of grass.
Baa, baa !'

'Then come home,' he said; and after leading her to the stable, he tied her up, and went in to his father, and told him how well he had fed the goat; but the tailor could not

him, and upon going out into the stable and asking the goat, the wicked animal replied :

'How can I be full?
There was nothing to pull,
Not even a blade of grass.'

'Oh dear,' cried the tailor, 'what dreadful boys, one as bad as the other! he shall not stay here to make a fool of me.' He beat the boy with the yard measure, in his rage so dreadfully that he rushed out of the house and ran away.

Now the tailor remained at home alone with his goat, and the next morning he went into the stable himself, and said to her: 'Come, my precious animal, I will take you out to-day myself.' So he took her a little distance to some green hedges, near which grew bright tender grass, of which goats are very fond, and said: 'This time you can enjoy yourself to your heart's content.'

He left her there till the evening, and then he asked, 'Have you eaten as much as you like, Nanny?' She replied:

'I have had enough
Of the nicest stuff.
I could not eat any more.
Baa, baa !'

So he led her home, and tied her fast in the stable. He had not, however, gone far from the door when he turned back, and again asked her if she was satisfied. To his surprise, she said:

'How can I be?
For I did not see
A single blade of grass.
Baa, baa !'

When the tailor heard this, he was startled, and saw at once that he had punished his three sons unjustly. 'You ungrateful animal!' he cried. 'It would be a slight punishment to you to send you away as I did my sons. But wait a bit. I will mark you in such a manner that you will never dare to show yourself

again amongst honest tailors.' So he seized a razor, shaved the head of the goat, and shaved it as smooth as the back of a hand; and then, as a blow from the yard measure would have been too great an honour, the tailor fetched a whip, and gave the goat two or three such cuts with it that the animal ran out, and ran away with all its might.

The tailor, being now quite alone in his house, began to feel very miserable. He would have been glad to have his sons home again, but he knew not where to find them.

The eldest had apprenticed himself to a joiner, and acquired the knowledge of the trade so quickly that his master was well pleased with him. When the time came for him to travel, his master gave him a table. It was nothing to look at, for the wood was of the most common sort, but it possessed one quality. If anyone addressed it and said, 'Table, prepare dinner!' immediately the table obeyed, and quickly covered itself with a snowy cloth, on which stood plates, knives, and forks, with dishes and tureens full of good things to eat, and the bright sparkling red wine in glass goblets which made glad the heart.

The young apprentice thought that with such a table he could want nothing else in the world, and started on his journey without troubling himself to find an inn, either good or bad, perhaps where he might be unable to get anything to eat or drink. And so it happened to him that, wherever he travelled, whether through wood or meadow, he had only to take his table from his back, place it on the ground, and say, 'Table, prepare thyself!' and immediately it was ready, and could do with all that heart could wish.

At last it came into his mind that he would return to his father, whose anger must have been appeased by this time. With such a table as he possessed, he was sure to receive a welcome. He therefore turned his steps homewards, and

* Young tradesmen are obliged in Germany to travel to improve their knowledge of the different branches of their trade.

wards evening came to an inn by the roadside, which was full of guests. They asked him in, and invited him to sit and eat with them.

The young joiner said, 'Do you think I am going to be satisfied with such a supper as that? No. Wait a bit; you shall be *my* guests.'

The host laughed, and thought his visitor was making jokes; but he unfastened the little table from his back, placed it on the floor of the room, and said, 'Table, prepare thyself!' In a moment the table was covered with a most splendid supper, as good as, and even better than, the landlord could have provided. The smell was pleasant to the noses of the guests.

Then the joiner said, 'Dear friends, seat yourselves; you are quite welcome.' And when they saw that he was really in earnest, they did not allow themselves to be asked twice, but took their places at the table, and used their knives and forks bravely. Their surprise was increased when they observed that as soon as a dish was empty, it was instantly replaced by a full one.

The landlord stood in a corner watching the affair, but he thought, 'If I had such a cook as that, it would make the fortune of my house.'

The joiner and his guests spent great part of the night enjoying themselves, but at last they went to their rooms; and the young man carried his table with him, and placed it against the wall. But the landlord's thoughts gave him no rest all night. At last he remembered that he had in his lumber-room an old table just like it in appearance; so he rose and went very quietly to fetch it, and changed the tables.

The next morning the youth, after paying for the night's expenses, packed up his table and went his way, quite unaware of having a false one.

About noon he reached home, and the old tailor welcomed him back with great joy. 'Well, my son,' he asked, 'and what have you been learning?'
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'Father,' he replied, 'I am a cabinet-maker, and can do well at my trade.'

'It is a good business,' said the tailor; 'but how much have you gained by it?'

'The best thing I have gained,' he said, 'is that little table.'

The tailor examined it on all sides, and then said, 'It cannot certainly be of much value; why, it is old and worn out.'

'Ah,' said the son, 'but it is a table that covers itself. When I stand up and say, "Table, prepare thyself!" it instantly prepares a splendid dinner, with plates, knives, glasses, and dishes of various kinds, and rich wines will rejoice your heart. You go and invite all our friends to dinner, and you will soon discover what my table can do.'

The tailor hastened to follow his son's advice; and when his company were all assembled, expecting a splendid feast, the young man placed his table in the centre of the room, and said, 'Table, prepare thyself!' But the table did not move; it was there as empty as any other table, for it did not understand what was said to it.

When the poor young man discovered that he had been deceived, and his table changed for another, he stood before his company covered with shame, for he felt sure they would regard him as false. His relations laughed at him, and he was obliged to go home again to get something to eat and drink. After this disgrace and disappointment, the father went back to his work with a hammer and thimble, and the son was obliged to work with a plane and joiner.

The second son had apprenticed himself to a miller, and when his time was up his master said:

'You have worked so well while you have been with me. I mean to make you a present of a wonderful donkey; but you must tell me that he can neither draw a cart nor carry a sack.'

'Then he will be of no use to me,' said the youth.

'But,' said his master, 'he drops from his mouth gold. You have only to lay a cloth on the ground, and lead the donkey on it, and say, "Bricklebrit!" and immediately pieces of gold will drop from his mouth.'

'That is a fine thing,' said the young man, and, thanking his master, he bade him farewell, and started on his travels.

He soon discovered the value of his donkey, for if he wanted money, he could say, 'Bricklebrit!' and gold would cover the ground, which he had only the trouble of picking up. So wherever he went he had the best of everything that money could buy, for his purse was always full.

After he had been for some time travelling he began to think of home. 'For,' he said to himself, 'if I can return with plenty of money, my father will forget his anger and receive me kindly.'

It happened that he came at last to the same inn at which his brother's table had been changed. He led his donkey by the bridle, and the landlord wished to take the animal to the stable; but the young man said, 'Don't trouble yourself, landlord. I always tie up old Grizzle myself, for I like to know where he is.'

The landlord wondered at first, and then he thought that a guest who tied up his donkey himself had not much to spend; but when the stranger put his hand in his pocket, and, pulling out two gold pieces, said he should like a good supper prepared for him, the landlord opened his eyes wide, and ran to order the best he had in the house.

After dinner the young miller asked for his bill, and the host charged two more gold pieces than it really amounted to. The young man, after searching in his pockets, found he had not enough to pay. 'Wait a moment, landlord,' he said; 'I will soon fetch some more;' and he rose up hastily, carrying the tablecloth with him.

The landlord, who could not understand these movements,

was curious. So he slipped out and followed his guest, he saw enter the stable, and fasten the door behind him. he found a hole formed in the door, through which he peered. Then he saw the stranger stretch out the tablecloth on the ground, lead the donkey on it, and heard him cry, 'Bricklebrit!' At the same moment the animal began to pour a shower of pieces from his mouth, which fell on the earth like rain. 'By my word!' cried the landlord, 'these ducats are soon earned. Such a purse of gold wouldn't be bad.'

The young man paid his reckoning and went to bed; but the innkeeper slipped into the stable during the night, led away the gold-coiner, and tied up another donkey in its place. The next morning the young man rose, led the donkey away, and thought he had his gold ass with him. He reached home about noon, and received a kind reception from his father, who was glad to see him.

'And what trade have you been learning, my son?' asked the father.

'I am a miller, dear father,' he replied.

'And what have you gained by your travels?' was the next question.

'Only a donkey.'

'We have donkeys enough here already,' said his father. 'Now, if you had brought a goat, it might have been useful.'

'Yes,' said the youth, 'so it might; but not so valuable as the animal I have brought—it is not like a common donkey. Why, father, it can coin money. If I say "Bricklebrit," a shower will fall quite a shower of gold from its mouth on which I lay under it. Let me show you,' he continued. 'I will bring for all our relations to come here, and I will give them money enough to make them rich people.'

'That is good news,' said the father; 'and if this be true, I shall be able to give up stitching, and lay my needle aside for ever.' And away he went to invite his relations. As soon as they had assembled, the young miller

place on the floor, and spread the cloth over it. Then he went out, and brought the donkey into the room. 'Now, pay attention,' he exclaimed, at the same time saying 'Bricklebrit,' more than once; but no gold pieces fell, the animal not understanding what was said to him. The poor young miller's face fell. He knew now that he had been cheated. He could therefore only, with every apology, send his relations away as poor as they came. His father also was obliged to continue his sewing and cutting out, and the young man obtained work at a miller's close by.

The third brother had bound himself apprentice to a turner, and as this is a difficult trade to learn, he remained longer than his brothers had done. They wrote to him, however, and told him how unfortunate they had been, and how the inn-keeper had stolen from them such valuable possessions.

At last the young brother was free to travel, and his master offered him as a farewell gift a bag, and said, 'I give you this as a reward for your industry and steady conduct, and there is a stick in the bag.'

'I can carry the bag on my shoulders,' replied the youth, 'and it will be of great service to me; but what do I want with the stick—it will only make it heavier?'

'I will tell you,' replied his master. 'If anyone attempts to ill-treat you, you have only to say, "Now, stick, jump out of the bag," and immediately it will spring upon the shoulders of your assailant, and give him such a thrashing that he will not be able to move for days afterwards—unless you stop it—for the stick will go on till you say, "Now, stick, into the bag again."'

The youth, on hearing this, thanked his master for his present, and started on his travels. He found it very useful, for if anyone ventured to molest him, he had only to say, 'Out of the bag, stick,' and out it sprang upon the shoulders of the offender, beating him sharply and quickly, and although he felt the pain, he could not see who struck him.

One evening the young turner arrived at the inn where the landlord had robbed his brothers. He went in, and, laying his bag on the table, began to talk of the wonderful things he had seen and heard in the world during his travels. 'Indeed,' he said, 'some have found tables which could spread themselves with a great feast when ordered to do so, and others have possessed donkeys who could coin gold from their mouths besides many other wonderful things, which I need not describe; but they are nothing when compared with what I can carry in my bag.'

The landlord pricked up his ears. 'What! could nothing in the world be compared to the contents of that bag?' thought he. 'No doubt, then, it is full of precious stones, and I ought to have fairness to have it with my other two prizes. All good things go in threes.'

When bed-time came, the young man stretched himself on the bench, and placed the bag under his head for a pillow. The landlord waited in another room till he thought the visitor was fast asleep, then he approached softly, and tried in the gentlest manner to pull the bag from under the sleeper's head, intending to put another in its place. But the traveller was not asleep. He lay watching the innkeeper's movements, and just as he had nearly succeeded in pulling away the bag, he cried out suddenly, 'Stick, stick, come out of your bag.' At that moment the stick was on the thief's shoulders, thumping away on his back, till the seams of his coat were ripped from the bottom. In vain he cried for mercy; the louder he screamed, so much the stronger were the blows he received, till at last he fell to the ground quite exhausted.

Then the youth bade the stick desist for a time, and said to the innkeeper, 'It is useless for you to cry for mercy. Where are the table and the golden ass that you stole? If you had better go and bring them here, for if they are not given to me, we will begin the same performance over again.'

'Oh, no, no!' cried the landlord feebly; 'I will give you

thing up to you directly, if you will only make that little imp creep back into the bag.'

'I will do so,' said the young man; 'and I advise you to keep to your word, unless you wish for another thrashing. Into your bag, stick,' he continued; and the stick obeyed, so the innkeeper rested in peace till the next day, when, still smarting with the chastisement he had received, he gave up the stolen goods to the owner of the bag.

The youth arrived at his father's house with the table and the donkey, and was received very joyfully. The tailor asked him about his trade, and whether he had brought home anything worth having. 'I have a bag, and a stick in it, dear father,' he replied.

'That was scarcely worth the trouble of bringing,' said his father, 'for you can cut as many as you like in any wood.'

'Ah, but not like mine, father; why, I have only to say, "Out of the bag, stick," and it will jump out and thrash anyone who attempts to interfere with me, till they cry for mercy. Through this stick I have recovered the table and the donkey which the thievish innkeeper stole from my brothers. Let them both be sent for, and then invite our relations to visit us; I can not only give them a splendid feast, but fill their pockets with gold also.'

The tailor was half afraid to believe all these promises, after having been already so deceived, yet he went out and invited his relations to assemble at his house. Then the young turner laid a cloth on the floor of the room, led the ass upon it, and said, 'Now, dear brother, speak to him.'

'Bricklebrit!' exclaimed the young miller. At the word, down fell the gold pieces on the cloth as thick as rain, and continued to fall till everyone had gathered up as much as he could possibly carry. (Would not you have liked to be there?) After this, the donkey was led away, and the youngest brother placed the table in the middle of the room, and said to his eldest brother, 'Dear brother, it is your turn to speak now.'

No sooner had the young cabinet-maker exclaimed, 'prepare the dinner,' than the most splendid dishes appeared upon it, with the richest wines, and every necessary for a feast; and you may fancy how they all enjoyed themselves. Never before had there been such an entertainment at the tailor's house, and the whole company remained together nearly morning, feasting and making merry. After the tailor locked up in a drawer his needle and thread, his measure, and his goose, and lived the remainder of his life with his three sons.

But where is the goat all this while, whose deceit caused the tailor to turn his sons out of doors? I am just going to tell you. She was so ashamed of her bald head that she hid herself in a fox's hole, till the hair should grow again.

When the fox came home at night, he saw a pair of eyes shining upon him out of the darkness like fire. In great fright he rushed back, and ran away as fast as he could. On the way he met a bear, who, seeing the fox in such a hurry, exclaimed:

'Whatever is the matter, brother? Why, you look so scared!'

'Oh,' he answered, 'there is a dreadful animal at the bottom of my den, who glared at me with such fiery eyes.'

'We'll soon drive him out,' said the bear, quite bold. He walked to the hole and looked in; but no sooner did he catch a glimpse of those burning eyes than his terror caused him to turn on his heels as the fox had done, rather than have anything to do with such a fierce animal.

On his way home a bee met him, and, observing his hair stood on end, she said to him, 'Why, Grandfather, what is the matter? You have such a woeful face. Is all your fun gone?' 'It is all very fine talking,' replied the bear; 'but if you had seen the horrid man with his glaring eyes in the fox's den, you wouldn't have had the same fun left in you; and the worst is we can't get him out.'

the bee, 'I pity you, bear, very much, and I know I am only a poor, weak little creature, that you great animals scarcely notice when we meet. Yet I believe I can help you in this



THE YOUTH ARRIVED AT HIS FATHER'S HOUSE WITH THE TABLE AND THE DONKEY.

matter.' And away she flew into the fox-hole, and, perching herself on the goat's head, stung her so fiercely that she rushed out quite frantic, crying, 'Baa, baa!' and has never been heard of since.

THE ELVES.

A SHOEMAKER once became so very poor, not by any fault of his own, that at last he had only just enough leather left to make one pair of shoes. So one evening he cut out the shoes

and laid them in readiness to begin work early the morning. He had a clear conscience, so he lay down to bed and slept in peace.

In the morning he rose and went to his work, but he was surprised he was to find the shoes on the table beautifully. In his wonderment he knew not what to say. He took the shoes in his hand, and examined them inside and out, and was not a false stitch in either of them, they were a masterpiece.

Soon after a customer came in, who was so pleased with them that he offered to purchase them at more than the price. The shoemaker could, therefore, with this money buy leather enough to make two pairs of shoes. He cut out and prepared the leather in the evening, that he might be ready to work at them next morning. But he had no need to enter his workshop there stood two pairs of shoes beautifully finished. He had no lack of customers now, for two customers came and paid such a good price for the two pairs that he had enough to buy leather for four pairs. This he cut out and prepared two pairs of shoes, which he laid ready for work the next morning, but on coming down, as usual, there were the shoes quite finished and ready for sale. And so it went on—what he cut out at night was always completed by the morning, till he had nothing to do but buy the leather and cut out shoes. In fact, so much money came pouring in, that the poor shoemaker soon overcame all his difficulties, and became, as he had formerly been, a wealthy tradesman.

Now it happened one evening, not long before Christmas, that after the shoemaker had been cutting out several pairs of shoes, instead of going to bed he said, 'My dear, I shall go to find out who they are who help us in this way. We shall sit up and watch.'

The wife was overjoyed at the thought, and, like the shoemaker, with a candle burning, they hid themselves in a corner of the workshop behind their clothes, which hung there, and watched

clock struck twelve there came into the room two little mannikins without clothes, and seating themselves on the shoemaker's table, they took up the leather which he had cut out, and set to work so nimbly, stitching, sewing, and hammering with such swiftness, that the shoemaker became quite bewildered, although he could not take his eyes off them. They did not stop work for a moment till all the shoes were completed and placed on the table; then they skipped off the table and vanished.

The next morning the wife said to her husband, 'These little men have made us so rich that we ought to do something for them in return for their kindness. I will tell you what I have thought of. I am sure they must be almost frozen, running about naked as they do. So I mean to make them little shirts, trousers, waistcoats, and coats; and if you will get a pair of little shoes ready for each of them, I will knit some stockings.'

'I shall only be too glad to help you,' said the husband.

So they set to work busily, and in a very few days the clothes were quite ready. In the evening, instead of cutting out any more shoes, the man and woman laid out their gifts on the table in the workshop, and hid themselves, as before, in a corner, to see what the little men would do. At midnight they came bounding in, and jumped on the table, expecting to see the leather cut out for them to begin work. But nothing was to be seen excepting these beautiful little clothes. At first they were much surprised, but they began to dress themselves in eager haste, and were so delighted that they danced and jumped about the room, over stools and chairs, singing,

'Happy little men are we,
Smartly dressed, as you can see,
No more shoemakers to be.'

And at last they danced out of the room through the door, and never came back to work any more.

But after this the shoemaker, who had been kind to those who helped him, prospered in everything as long as he lived.

THE ELVES.

(SECOND STORY.)

THERE WAS once a poor servant-maid who was neat and industrious. She swept and dusted and kept the house in beautiful order.

One morning while she was busy at her work she found a letter on the doorstep, and not being able to read the letter she placed her broom in a corner and carried the letter to her master. She was greatly surprised to find that it was addressed to herself, and that it contained an invitation for her to go to the christening of one of the pixies' children. She knew not what she should do.

At last, after much talk with her master and mistress, she said that they could not dare to allow her to refuse, and she presented to go. No sooner had she done so than three good little people arrived and carried her away with them to the mountain, where the baby lived.

What a beautiful place it was, all glittering, very clean and so wonderfully elegant that it cannot be described! The lady was lying on a beautiful bed made of shining ebony, with pearl ornaments; the counterpane was of embroidered silk; the baby's cradle of carved ivory, and the font of solid gold.

The maiden stood godmother to the baby, and the fairies to take her home; but they begged her to stay for three days. These three days were passed in the most delightful manner, but they came to an end, and they requested to be taken home, so they stuffed her pockets with money and sent her home through the mountain back to the world. When she reached her old home, being very tired, she began work, she took the broom which stood in the corner and began to sweep.

Then a stranger came and asked her what she was doing, and she found that, instead of being only three days absent as she thought, she had been seven years with the good people in the mountain, and her former master had died during the time.

THE ELVES.

(THIRD STORY.)

A poor woman had a pretty little child carried away by the fairies, and a changeling with a thick head and staring eyes left in its place, which did nothing but eat and drink. In her trouble the mother went to a neighbour and asked her advice.

The neighbour said: 'Take the changeling into the kitchen, seat him on the hearth, make up a good fire, and then fill two eggshells with water, and place them on the fire to boil. That, perhaps, will make him laugh, and if he laughs you will get rid of him.'

So the woman went home and did as her neighbour advised, and when the changeling saw her fill the eggshells with water and set them on the fire, he said:

'Now, I am as old
As a mine of gold,
Yet I never saw
In my life before,
Water in eggshells boiled.'

And he began to laugh.

The moment he laughed, one of the men from the fairy mountain came into the kitchen; he brought the woman's own child with him, seated him on the hearth, and carried away the changeling.

THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM.

A MILLER once had a beautiful daughter, and as soon as she was grown up, his great wish was to see her well married and happy. So he decided that, if a suitable wooer came to his daughter could love, he would give his consent.

Not long after a suitor came for his daughter's hand. He appeared to be very rich, and the miller could find no objection to say against him. So he promised him his daughter. But the maiden did not love this suitor as a bride should love her bridegroom. She had no confidence in him, and when she looked at or thought of him, she shuddered.

One day he said to her : ' You are my affianced bride, but you have never once paid me a visit.'

Then said the maiden : ' I don't know where your house is.'

But when he told her he lived in the depths of the forest, she made excuses, and said she should never find the way.

' Yes, you will,' he said ; ' and you must come next week. I expect company on that day ; and to enable you to find the way through the wood to my house, I will strew salt over the pathway.'

So on Sunday, when the maiden had to set out on her journey, she felt very anxious, though she knew not why. But her chief anxiety was she of not being able to retrace her steps. So she filled her pockets full of peas and linseed to drop on the ground. And as she walked along the road, which was strewn with ashes, she dropped peas right and left on the ground at every step. And thus she walked for hours, till she came to the darkest part of the forest, and there she found a solitary cottage which did not please her at all—it looked gloomy, and not at all homelike. The door was open, so she walked in. There was no one to be seen, and the deepest silence reigned. Suddenly a voice cried out :

'Return, return, thou youthful bride !
A murderer's house this is inside.'

The maiden glanced up and saw that the voice came from a bird, whose cage hung on the wall ; again it cried :

'Return, thou youthful bride, return !
This is a murderer's house—return !'

Yet still her curiosity led her on from room to room, till she had been all over the house, which was quite empty—not a single human being could be seen. At last she found, in a cellar or a cave behind the house, a very old woman seated, who nodded at her.

'Can you tell me,' asked the maiden, 'if my bridegroom resides here?'

'Alas ! poor child,' answered the old woman, 'how did you find your way here ? this is a robbers' den. You imagine that you are a bride, and that your wedding will soon take place ; but there will be no marriage for you but with death. Do you see that large kettle ? Well, when once the robber gets you in his power, he will cut you in pieces without mercy, and I shall have to fill it with water and boil you in it, for he is a man and woman eater. Unless I take pity on you and save you now, you will be lost.'

So the old woman hid the young girl behind a large cask, where no one could see her.

'Keep as still as a mouse,' she said to her ; 'if you move or stir in the slightest, I know not what will happen to you ; but in the night, while the robbers sleep, we will make our escape : I have long waited for an opportunity of doing so.'

Scarcely had she finished speaking when the whole gang of robbers returned home. They brought in another young girl whom they had decoyed in their toils, and they were deaf to her cries and lamentations. They gave her wine to drink, three glasses full, one of white, one of red, and one golden, which caused her to swoon away. Then they tore off her clothes, laid her on a table, cut up her beautiful form into

pieces, and strewed salt over them. The poor bride cask trembled with horror at what she saw, for she knew to what a fate she had been destined by her pretended groom. One of the robbers noticed on the finger of the maiden a gold ring, and as he could not get the ring, took a hatchet and chopped off the finger. But as the finger sprang up in the air, over the cask behind the bride was hidden, and fell into her lap! The robbers light and searched for it everywhere, but could not find it. Then said one of them: 'Have you looked behind the cask?'

'Nonsense!' cried the old woman, 'come to supper, and look for it in the morning; the finger cannot run away.'

'The old woman is right,' said their chief; 'leave off looking, and come to supper.'

As the old woman waited upon them, she was able to slip sleeping draught into the wine, and they were soon fast asleep on the ground, and snoring loudly.

As soon as the maiden heard this she came out from the cask, but when she saw that she had to step over the sleepers, who lay stretched on the ground, she was in great terror lest she should awaken them. But God helped her, that she escaped without arousing them. The old woman stepped over with her, opened the doors, and the robbers hastened away as quickly as they could from the cask. The strewed ashes had been scattered away by the wind, but the peas and the linseed had germinated, and the plants were springing up all over the pathway, so that in the light they could easily find their way.

They walked all night, and arrived next morning at the mill. And the maiden immediately described to her father the horrors she had seen. When the day came which was fixed for the wedding, the miller invited all his relatives and acquaintances to be present.

As they sat at the table, the miller requested one of the guests to relate any wonderful circumstance which

occurred to them on their travels. After one or two interesting incidents had been told, the bridegroom said to the bride, who sat in silence, 'Now, my love, have you nothing to relate? do tell us something.'

'I will tell you a strange dream, if you like,' she replied.

'Oh yes,' they all cried, 'let us have it.'

'It was a horrible dream,' she said. 'But, still, I will describe it. I dreamt that I went through a forest for a long way, till at last I came to a lonely house in the densest and darkest part; there was not a single human being in sight, but on the wall outside hung a cage with a bird in, and the bird cried:

"Return, return, thou youthful bride!
This is a murderer's den."

And the bird kept repeating these words; yet I would not believe it, but went on through all the rooms, which were empty and gloomy. At last I came to a cellar, where sat a very old woman, who shook her head mournfully when she saw me. I asked her if my bridegroom dwelt in that house, and she answered, "Alas! poor child, he does dwell here, but this is a murderer's den."

And then she went on to relate how the old woman had hidden her behind a cask, and the horrors she had seen. At last, after describing the manner in which one of the robbers had chopped off the poor girl's finger, because he could not get at the ring, she said: 'The finger with the ring flew up as he chopped, and fell behind the cask right into my lap. And there is the finger and the ring.'

At these words she placed it on the table, rose up, and pointed it out to everyone present. The robber bridegroom, who during this description had been gradually becoming pale as death, sprang up and would have fled, but the guests held him fast and took him at once before the justices. Soon the whole gang were arrested, and he and they were executed for their shameful deeds.

OLD SULTAN AND HIS FRIENDS

A COUNTRYMAN had a faithful hound, called Sultan, grown old in his service. He had lost all his teeth, and no longer follow with the pack.

One day the countryman stood before the door with his wife and said to her, 'Old Sultan is no longer of any use. I will shoot him to-morrow.'

But the mistress, who had pity for the faithful hound, exclaimed, 'How can you destroy him, after he has served us so many years? I am sure we could spare him some allowance.'

'No, no,' replied her husband, 'that is not just. He has not a tooth in his head, and the thieves are not afraid of him, so he may as well go. If he has served us well, he also been well fed.'

The poor dog, who was lying stretched out in the yard far off, heard all that was said, and it made him sad that the morrow would be his last day.

Now, Sultan had a good friend, a wolf; so in the evening he slipped out into the forest to visit him, and complained of the fate which awaited him.

'Listen, gossip,' said the wolf; 'take courage. I will get you out of your trouble. I have thought of something. To-morrow morning early your master and his wife are going into the fields haymaking, and they will take their dog with them. While they are at work, they will lay themselves under the hedge in the shadow. You lay yourself by the door, as if you meant to watch him. I will wait till all is quiet, and then I will run out of the wood and seize the child. Then you will spring after me, as if you would seize it from me. I will let the child fall, and you shall bring it back to its parents. They will believe that you have saved it from me, and they will be the more thankful because they intended to kill you.'

of that, you will be in full favour, and nothing will ever cause them to give you up.'

The dog followed this advice, and, as it had been planned, so it was accomplished. The father screamed as he saw the wolf run away with his child through the wood; but when poor old Sultan brought it back, his joy and gratitude knew no bounds. He stroked and patted the old dog, saying, 'Nothing shall ever hurt you now, you dear old dog, and you shall never want for food and shelter as long as you live.'

To his wife he said, 'Go home at once, wife, and cook some bread and milk for poor old Sultan. It is soft, and will not require teeth to bite it. And bring the pillow from my arm-chair. He shall have it for a bed.'

And so from this time old Sultan had every comfort and contentment that his heart could wish. By-and-by Sultan went to pay the wolf a visit, and told him of his good fortune.

'Gossip,' he said slyly, 'I suppose now you will shut your eyes, and not see if I carry away a fat sheep from your master's flock. It is very hard to get food nowadays.'

'I can't help that,' said the dog. 'My master trusts in me, and I dare not allow you to do so.'

The wolf, however, did not believe the dog spoke in earnest, so he came in the night, slipped into the fold, and would have carried off a sheep, if Sultan had not forewarned his master of the wolf's intention.

He watched for him, and gave him a good combing with the flail, till he was almost bare of hair.

So he was obliged to rush away, crying out, however, to the dog, 'Only wait a little, you false friend! You shall pay for this.'

The next morning the wolf sent a challenge to the dog by his friend the wild boar, who had promised to stand second. They appointed to meet in the wood, and poor old Sultan had no one to stand by him but a cat, who had only three legs. Puss hobbled along on her three legs with great pain, and her tail

stood erect. The wolf and the wild boar were already appointed spot, but when they saw their adversaries proaching, they thought that the cat's tail was a snake that each time puss humped her back, as she hopped, to be a large stone which Sultan intended to throw at them. They were both so frightened that the wild boar crept among the dried leaves, and the wolf sprang up a tree.

The dog and the cat were much surprised when they came to the place to find no one there, but the cat espied something on the ground which she took for a mouse.

Now, the wild boar, when he crept among the dried leaves to hide himself, left his gray ears sticking out; and, when he began to smell about, she saw the ears move, and, taking them for a mouse, sprang forward, caught the ear in her mouth and bit it in half. The wild boar started up with a scream, exclaiming, 'There is the real offender up in the tree,' and ran away as fast as he could. The dog and the cat came up and saw the wolf, who was so ashamed of his conduct that he came down from the tree and made friends with the dog again.

THE SIX SWANS.

A KING once hunted in a large forest with such eagerness that none of his people could keep up with him. When he came, he stopped and looked around him, but found that he had lost his way. He sought a path out, but could find none. Then he saw an old woman, with a head always bent down, coming towards him; but she was a witch.

'My good woman,' said he to her, 'can you not show me a way through the forest?'

'Oh yes, sir king,' she answered, 'I can; but on condition that you will give me six swans.'

dition; and, if you will not fulfil it, you will never get out of the forest, and will die of hunger.'

'What is the condition?' asked the king.

'I have a daughter,' said the old woman, 'who is as beautiful a girl as is to be found in the world, and well deserves to be your wife. If you will make her your queen, I will show you the way out of the wood.' The king, in the anguish of his heart, consented, and the old woman led him to her hut, where her daughter sat by the fire. She received the king as if she expected him, and he saw that she was very beautiful; but she did not please him, and he could not look at her without a secret shuddering. After he had raised the girl on to his horse, the old woman showed him the way, and the king reached his royal castle, where the wedding was celebrated.

The king had already been married once, and had of his first wife seven children, six boys and a girl, whom he loved above everything in the world. Now, as he feared that the stepmother might not treat them well, but do them some harm, he placed them in a solitary castle which stood in the midst of a wood. It lay so concealed, and the way to it was so difficult to find, that he himself could not have found it, if the wise woman had not given him a ball of yarn of wonderful properties. If he threw it down before him, it unwound itself and showed him the way. The king, however, went so often to his dear children that the queen noticed his absence. She was curious, and wanted to know what he had to do all alone in the wood. She gave his servants much money, and they betrayed to her the secret, and told her also of the ball of yarn which alone could show the way. She had now no rest until she had found out where the king kept the ball, and then she made little white silk shirts, and, as she had learnt witchcraft of her mother, she sewed in them a charm. And when the king had ridden to the hunt, she took the little shirts and went into the wood, the ball of yarn showing her the way. The children, who saw someone coming in the distance, thought that it was

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their father, and, full of joy, ran to meet him. Then she gave over each of them a shirt, and as it touched them they turned into swans, and flew away over the forest. The girl went home quite pleased, and thought that she was with them; but the girl had not run out with her brothers, and knew nothing of her. The next day the king went to his children, but found no one except the girl.

'Where are thy brothers?' asked the king.

'Ah, dear father,' answered she, 'they are away, and have left me alone.' And she told him that she had seen from her window how her brothers had flown away as swans over the wood, and showed him the feathers which they had left in the yard, and which she had picked up. The king was angry, but he never thought that the queen had done this to her daughter, and, because he feared that the girl would be stolen from him, he wished to take her with him. But she was frightened by the stepmother, and begged the king that she might stay in the forest castle just one more night.

The poor girl thought, 'As I cannot stay here longer, I will go and look for my brothers.' When night came, she ran straight into the wood. She walked the whole night through, and also the next day, without stopping, till she could go no farther from weariness. Then she saw a light in the distance, and found a room with six beds, but she did not trust herself to lie down, but crept under one and lay on the ground, intending to pass the night there. But just as the sun was about to set she heard a rustling, and saw six swans had flown in at the window. They placed their wings on the ground, and blew at each other and blew the feathers off, and their swans' skins they stripped of their shirt. Then the girl looked at them, and recognised her brothers. She was glad, and crept out from under the bed. The brothers were not less rejoiced when they saw their sister, but their joy was of short duration.

'You cannot stay here,' said they to her, 'this is

for robbers ; if they come home and find you, they will murder you.'

'Could you not protect me?' asked the sister.

'No,' answered they ; 'for we can only lay aside our swans' skins for a quarter of an hour every evening, and have our human shape, and then we are again changed into swans.'

The sister wept, and said, 'Can you not be redeemed?'

'No,' answered they ; 'the conditions are too severe. You must neither speak nor laugh for six years, and must make for us six shirts of asters sewn together. If but a single word escaped from your mouth, your labour would be lost.

As the brothers spoke, the quarter of an hour was past and they flew again, as swans, out of the window.

The maiden, however, took a firm resolution to redeem her brothers, even should it cost her her life. She left the hut, went into the midst of the wood, lay down under a tree, and passed the night there. On the next morning she went out, collected asters, and began to sew them together. She could speak with no man, and she had no desire to laugh ; she sat there and only looked at her work. When she had already spent a long time there, it happened that the king of the country hunted in the forest, and his huntsmen came to the tree in which the maiden sat. They called her and said, 'Who art thou?' But she gave no answer. 'Come to us,' said they ; 'we will do you no harm.' She merely shook her head ; as they pressed her further with questions, she threw down to them her golden necklace, thinking that they would be content with it. They did not, however, stop. She then threw down her girdle, and when that was of no use her garters, and by-and-by everything she could spare, so that she retained nothing but her skirts. The huntsmen would not be refused ; they climbed the tree, brought down the maiden, and led her before the king. The king asked : 'Who art thou? what art thou doing on the tree?' But she answered not ; he put these questions to her in all the languages that he knew, but she remained as dumb as

a fish. Yet, because she was so beautiful, the king's heart moved, and he fell greatly in love with her. He wrapped her in his cloak, took her before him on his horse, and brought her into his castle. Then he had her dressed in rich clothes, and she shone in her beauty as the bright day; but she could not be forced from her. He placed her at table beside him, and her modest manners and demeanour pleased him so much that he said: 'I desire to marry her, and no one else on earth.' And after a few days he married her.

The king, however, had a bad mother, who was discontented with the marriage, and spoke evil of the young queen. 'I know,' said she, 'who the girl is? she cannot speak; she is not worthy of a king.'

After a year, when the queen's first child was born, the old woman took it away and smeared her mouth with blood, so that she was asleep. Then she went to the king and accused him of being a cannibal. The king would not believe it, and would not suffer anyone to injure her; while she sat constantly at the king's side, and cared for nothing else. When a second child was born, the wicked stepmother used the same deceit; but the king could not bring himself to believe her. He said: 'She is too pious and good to do such a thing; if she were not so good, and could defend herself, her innocence would come out.' But when the old woman stole the newly-born son the next time, and accused the queen, who uttered no word of defence, the king could not help passing judgment, and condemned her to death by fire.

The day came on which the sentence was to be carried out. It was the last of the six years during which she was forbidden to speak or laugh; and she had delivered her dear brother from the power of the magic spells. The six shirts were made of gold, except the left sleeve of the last, which was wanting. When she was led to the stake she placed them on her arm, and when she stood on the pyre, and the fire was just lighted, she looked round and saw six swans flying through the air toward

Then she knew that her deliverance was at hand, and her heart leaped for joy. The swans rushed towards her, and swept so low that she could throw the shirts over them; and as soon as they touched them the swans' skins fell off, and her brothers stood before her strong and beautiful; but the youngest lacked his left arm, instead of which a swan's wing was on his shoulder. They embraced and kissed each other, and the queen went to the king, who was greatly moved as she said: 'Dearest husband, I may now speak, and reveal to you that I am innocent, and falsely accused.' She then told him of the deceit of the old woman, who had taken away her three children and hidden them. To the great joy of the king they were brought forth, and the wicked mother-in-law was bound to the stake and burnt to ashes. The king, however, and the queen with her six brothers, lived for many years in happiness and peace.

BRIAR ROSE.

ONCE upon a time there lived a king and queen who lamented every day because they had no children. One day, when the queen was in her bath, a frog crept out of the water, and, croaking, said: 'Thy wish will be accomplished; before the end of the year thou shalt have a little daughter.'

And it happened as the frog had prophesied. The queen had a little child, who was so beautiful that the king could hardly contain himself for joy, and ordered a great entertainment. He not only invited his relations, friends, and acquaintance, but also the wise women who could endow his daughter with fairy gifts. There were thirteen of them; but only twelve were invited, as he had only twelve golden plates for them.

The feast was conducted with great pomp, and at the end of it the wise women endowed the king's child with their

wonderful gifts. The first gave her virtue, the second the third riches, and so to the eleventh, with all that was wished for in the world.

Before the twelfth could speak, in walked the third. She wished to be revenged for not having been invited; without saluting or noticing anyone, cried with a loud voice, 'In her fifteenth year the king's daughter shall prick her finger with a spindle, and fall down dead;' and, without a word, she turned round, and left the hall.

Everyone was alarmed; but the twelfth, who had not spoken, stepped forward. She could not undo the decree, but she could soften it. So she said: 'The daughter shall not die, but a deep sleep shall fall upon her, which she shall remain for a hundred years.'

The king, who wished to preserve his child, issued a decree that all the spindles in his kingdom should be burnt.

In every respect the prophecies of the good fairies were fulfilled; for the young princess was so beautiful, so good, and so clever, that those who saw her could not help loving her. It happened that on the day when she was just fifteen years old, the king and queen were away, and the maiden was left alone in the castle, and she took a fancy to explore it. She walked from room to room, through galleries and passages, till she came at last to an old tower.

She ascended the narrow, winding staircase, till at length she came to a little door. In the lock was stuck a rusty key, and as she turned it the door sprang open, and there, in a room, sat an old woman spinning flax.

'Good-morning, old lady,' said the princess. 'What are you doing?'

'I am spinning,' she replied, nodding her head.

'And what is this funny thing that springs about you?' the princess asked, at the same time taking the spindle in her hand and trying to spin. Scarcely had she given the wheel a turn when the bad fairy's prophecy was fulfilled—the point

spindle stuck into her finger. At the same moment the king's daughter fell back on a bed which stood near, while a deep sleep came upon her, and not only on the princess, but on the whole of the inhabitants of the castle—the king and queen, who had returned and were in the state chamber, and all their household with them.

This sleep fell also on the horses in the stable, the dogs in the outer court, the pigeons on the roof, the flies on the wall—yes, and even the fire that flickered on the hearth became still and slept. The meat roasting before the fire stayed its frizzling; the cook in the kitchen, who was just going to box the ears of the scullion, let his hand drop, and sank to sleep; the wind lay at rest, and upon the trees which surrounded the castle not a leaf stirred.

In a few hours there sprung up around the castle a hedge of thorns, which year after year grew higher and higher, till at last nothing could be seen of the castle above it, not even the roof nor the flag on the tower.

A legend spread over the country of the 'sleeping beauty,' as the king's daughter was called. And from time to time the sons of kings came to the spot, and tried to penetrate through the protecting hedge of thorns; but they found it impossible, for the thorns, as if they had hands, seized the young men, and held them so fast that they could not free themselves, and died a miserable death.

Many years passed away, and at length another prince came to that part of the country, and heard an old man relate the story of the thorn-surrounded castle, in which the wonderful sleeping beauty, the king's daughter, lay, who had already slept for nearly a hundred years, with the king and queen and the whole household.

The prince had heard his grandfather talk of the fate of former princes who had tried to force their way through the hedge of thorns, and how they were caught by the bushes, and died a miserable death. But he said: 'It matters not to me; I

have no fear. I will see this beautiful Briar Rose.' The old man might dissuade him as he would, but he attended to his words.

Now, the hundred years had come to a close, and he arrived for Briar Rose to be awaked. When the prince reached the hedge of thorns, he found nothing but large beautiful flowers, which separated from each other to allow him to pass, and closed again behind him like a wall.

In the castle yard he saw horses and staghounds gathered together. On the roof sat the pigeons, with their heads tucked under their wings.

In the castle the cook, the kitchen-maid, and even the king and queen on the wall, still slept; and in the saloon he found the king and queen sleeping on their thrones, surrounded by the courtiers and the household, all slumbering peacefully. So deep was the stillness that he could hear his own breathing. How he wandered on from room to room, till he reached the room where the beautiful princess slept. She lay looking so beautiful that he could not turn away his eyes, but stooped and kissed her. At the touch Briar Rose opened her eyes, awoke, and looked smilingly at him.

Then they went down together to the king and queen, who awoke, with the whole court, and looked at each other in surprise; and everybody resumed the employment in which they had been engaged when the enchantment fell upon him. The king's horse rose and shook himself; the dog sprang up and barked; the pigeons drew out their heads from behind their wings, plumed their feathers, and flew to the field; even the fire in the hearth aroused itself, and its flickering flame soon burned into a blaze, to roast the dinner; and, more than all this, the hedge round the castle sank down and disappeared.

The marriage of the prince and princess was celebrated in a very short time, with great splendour, and they lived happily to the end.

KING THRUSHBEARD.

A KING had a daughter who was beautiful beyond measure, but so haughty and proud that she considered no man good enough to marry her. She pretended to accept one after another the suitors who approached her, and then treated them with mockery and scorn. The king made a great feast, and invited all the marriageable men for miles round to be present. They were introduced by their rank. First came a king, then dukes, then princes, and after these nobles.

But the princess, when asked to choose for herself, had some fault to find with each. One was too fat, another too thin, a third was short and thick, and a fourth had a face as pale as a ghost, and so on, till they all went away quite offended, except one son of the king of a neighbouring country—the highest of them all. Now, the princess, in her heart, liked this one of her suitors best, but she made no difference in her manner to him. The young prince had a very good-looking face, but his chin was a little crooked, and he had a rough beard.

‘Oh,’ said the young princess, when she saw he still waited after the others were gone, ‘what a chin he has, to be sure—just like a thrush’s beak! I shall call him King Thrushbeard;’ and she laughed heartily as she spoke; so people called him King Thrushbeard from that day.

After the feast was over, and the king found that not only had his daughter dismissed all her lovers, but that she had mocked and insulted his guests, he was very angry, and took an oath that his daughter should take as a husband the first poor wayfarer who came to the castle. A day or two after the princess heard the sound of music under her window. The king also heard it, and said, ‘Go at once and fetch the musician in.’

The servants obeyed, and presently returned with a wandering minstrel, who played and sang before the castle in hopes

of receiving an alms. He was dressed in soiled and tattered clothes, but the king made him stay and sing to them. When he had finished he asked for a little gift.

'Yes,' replied the king, 'you shall be rewarded. You have pleased me so well that I will give you my daughter as your wife.'

The princess was terrified at her father's words, and she had almost have rushed from the room, but the king prevented her. He said, 'you shall not escape. I took an oath that you should marry the first wayfarer who came to the door, and I will keep my word.'

All objections on the princess's part were useless. A priest was sent for, and she was obliged to plight her troth to a poor minstrel.

As soon as this was accomplished, the king said to his daughter, 'Now that you are the wife of a poor man, you see how unfit you are to remain in my castle. You must therefore depart at once with your husband.'

The musician took her by the hand as the king smiled and bled her away to travel on foot for a long distance. As they came to the borders of an extensive forest, which the young wife knew belonged to King Thrushbeard.

'Ah, me!' she cried, 'this wood belongs to the prince who has mocked and insulted me. Ah, poor delicate creature that I am, if I had only married him when he wanted me!'

By-and-by they entered a meadow, and she made the same lament, for it belonged to King Thrushbeard. But when at last they came to a large city, near which was his palace, her repeated lamentation at length annoyed her husband.

'It is not pleasant to me to hear you constantly repeating that you had married someone else; am I not good for you?'

She made no reply, and they continued to walk on. She was quite tired, and at last her husband stopped before a little house.

'What are we stopping here for?' she asked. 'Whose wretched house is this?'

'It is my house and yours,' he replied, 'where we must live together;' and he led her in, but the door was so low that they had to stoop as they entered.

'Where are the servants?' asked the king's daughter.

'What servants?' replied her husband. 'You must wait upon yourself now, and you will have to do all the work—to light the fire, to fetch the water, and cook my dinner—for I am too tired to help you.'

The princess was being punished now for her pride. Her husband, although he could sing, looked so repulsive in his ragged clothes, and with his face tied up as if he had the toothache, that she did not care to do anything for him. Besides, she knew nothing of cooking or lighting fires, so he had to get up and do it himself. After she had taken a little—for she was too sad to eat much—she laid herself down on a miserable bed quite tired out. In the morning, however, her husband woke her very early, that she might clean up the house and get breakfast, and she tried to do it to please him, for he was kind and patient with her. Thus they continued for a few days, till their stock of provisions was all gone. Then said the husband, 'Wife, we cannot go on in this way, staying here and earning nothing; you shall learn to plait willow and make baskets—it is not difficult—while I go and earn money some other way.'

So he went out, cut some willow-twigs, and brought them home. She soon learnt to plait, but the hard willow-twigs wounded her soft hands and made them quite sore.

'I see that will not do,' said her husband; 'you must try to spin, dearest—perhaps you may manage that better.'

The king's daughter tried spinning also, but it was of no use; the hard thread soon cut through her soft white fingers till the blood ran down.

'See, now,' said her husband, 'you are good for nothing at work. I am badly off indeed with such a helpless wife, so I

must find a trade for you. If I purchase a basketful of wares, you can sit in the market and sell them.'

'Ah,' thought she, 'when the market-people from my kingdom come out and see me sitting there with things how they will mock me!'

But she could not help herself; she was obliged to she did not want to die of hunger. The first time, everything turned out well. People bought goods with such a beautiful woman; all she had was sold, even the and they paid her whatever she asked, so that she was with plenty of money. They lived on this for some time long as it lasted—and then her husband bought another ful of wares and gave it to his wife, who went again to market, seated herself in a corner, and spread out her for sale. Suddenly a drunken hussar came by on horse and, not seeing the basket, rode right into it, breaking delicate wares into a thousand pieces. Then she began to weep, and knew not in her distress what to do, crying, 'Oh, what will become of me? what will my husband do?'

She ran home and related to him her misfortune.

'Why did you seat yourself at such a dangerous place in the market?' he said. 'There, stop your weeping; I see you are quite unfit to perform the simplest work. I have been to our king's castle, and they told me they want a kitchen-maid. I have promised to send you over every day; they are ready to take you; so come and have your supper. don't weep any more.'

And so the proud king's daughter became a kitchen-maid in the castle of King Thrushbeard. It was dreadfully hard as she had to wait upon the cook.

They brought her whatever pieces were left for her at home for dinner and supper, and she was often very hungry. But she could hear what went on in King Thrushbeard's castle, and at last the servants told her that a great festival was to take place in honour of the young king's marriage.

The poor wife, who remembered that she could once have been his wife but for her pride, felt very sad; yet she could not help going to the door of the grand saloon, that she might see the company arrive.

The room was full of light, and each one who stepped in seemed more elegant and beautiful than the last, and as the glory and splendour surrounded her she thought with a sorrowful heart of her fate, and lamented over the pride and haughtiness which had brought her into such terrible poverty and disgrace.

From the costly supper which was laid out for the guests came the most delicious odours, and the servants who waited threw pieces that were left on the plates as they passed her, which she gathered up and put into her basket to carry home.

All at once a noble-looking prince approached her. He was richly dressed in velvet and silver, and wore a golden chain round his neck. When he saw the beautiful princess at the door, he advanced and took her by the hand, to lead her into the ball-room, saying that she must dance with him. She was in a terrible fright, and struggled to get free, for she knew it was King Thrushbeard, her lover, whom she had treated with contempt. But it was useless to refuse, he held her hand so tightly, and led her in.

In the struggle the band that fastened her basket round her waist broke, and all the broken pieces which the servants had given her were scattered on the floor, and rolled in all directions, while the company looked on and laughed in tones of mockery. Her shame was now complete, and she wished she could at that moment hide herself a thousand fathoms deep in the earth. She rushed to the door to run away, but on the steps, in the dark, she met a man who seized her firmly, and brought her back into the castle; and as soon as he appeared in the light, she saw to her astonishment that it was King Thrushbeard.

‘Do not fear,’ said he in a gentle tone; ‘I and the wandering minstrel with whom you have lived in the wretched house in

the wood are the same. My love for you made me disguise that I might win you through your father's oath. I was a hussar who upset your basket. I have done it to try if all, you really loved King Thrushbeard, whom you refused to marry; and I hoped that your proud thoughts would be humbled, and your haughty spirit bend, and that it would be as a punishment for having mocked and spurned me.'

Then she wept bitterly, and said, 'I know I have been wrong, and I am not worthy to be your wife.'

But he said, 'Be comforted; all is past now. You are my wife, and we have a splendid festival to celebrate this evening after all.'

Then he took her to a beautiful chamber, where the king of the court dressed her in royal robes, and when her father came and conducted her to the great hall, there was her father and his whole court ready to receive her, and wish her a happy marriage with King Thrushbeard; and so was there an end to all her troubles. I wish, dear reader, you had been there to see.

FREDERICK AND CATHERINE

THERE was once a man called Frederick; he had a wife whose name was Catherine, and they had not long been married. One day Frederick said, 'I am going to work in the field; when I come back I shall be hungry, so let me have some nice cooked and a good draught of ale.'

'Very well,' said she, 'it shall be all ready.'

When dinner-time drew near she fetched a sausage from the chimney, and put it on the fire to fry. The sausage began to look brown and to crackle in the pan, while Catherine stood by holding its handle. Then she thought,

sausage is nearly ready, I might be drawing the ale.' Then she made the pan firm on the fire, took a can and went into the cellar to draw the ale. The beer ran into the can, and Catherine was watching it, when suddenly she thought, 'The dog is upstairs and not shut up, he might take the sausage out of the pan; luckily, I thought of it!' So she ran up the cellar steps. The dog had already the sausage in his mouth, and was dragging it along the ground. Away went Catherine after it, and away went the dog across the field; but the dog was swifter than she was, and ran away with the sausage. 'What is gone, is gone,' said Catherine. She turned round, and as she had run a good way and was tired, she walked home leisurely to cool herself.

Now, all this time the ale was running too, for Catherine had not turned the tap; and when the can was full, it ran into the cellar, and did not stop until the cask was empty. Catherine saw even from the steps what had happened.

'Oh dear,' said she, 'what is to be done to prevent Frederick from seeing it?

She thought a little, then she remembered that there was a sack of fine meal in the garret bought at the last fair, and that if she sprinkled this over the floor it would suck up the ale.

'How lucky,' said she, 'that we kept that meal! what one saves comes in use in time of need.' She then went for it, brought down the sack and threw it just on the can of beer so that it upset, and Frederick's draught was also swimming in the cellar.

'All right,' said she; 'when one goes, another may as well follow.'

Then she strewed the meal all over the cellar, and was quite pleased with her work, and said: 'How very neat and clean it looks!'

At noon Frederick came home. 'Now, wife, what have you for dinner?' 'Oh, Frederick,' answered she, 'I was cooking a sausage; but while I was drawing the ale the dog ran away with

it, and while I ran after the dog the ale all ran out, and I went to dry up the beer with the meal I upset the can. Be content, the cellar is now quite dry.

'Kate, Kate,' said he, 'you should not have done. Why did you leave the sausage to be stolen, and the beer run away, and then shake over it our fine meal?'

'Why, Frederick, I did not know; you should have told me.' The husband thought to himself: 'If my wife manages thus, I must look sharp myself.' Now, he had a good deal of gold in the house, so he said to Catherine:

'See, here are pretty yellow buttons, which I will put in a pot and bury in the stable; but take care that you do not touch them.'

'No, Frederick,' said she, 'I will not.'

Now, when Frederick was gone some pedlars came, with earthenware dishes and plates to sell, and asked the wife to buy them. 'My dear people,' said Catherine, 'I have no money, so I cannot buy; but if you could use yellow buttons I could buy of you.' 'Yellow buttons!' said they; 'let us see them?'

'Go into the stable and dig, and you will find the buttons; I dare not go myself.' So the rogues went: they dug and found pure gold. They took all and ran away, leaving behind their plates and dishes. Catherine thought she would use the new dishes, and as there was no want in the house she set them up all round the house as ornaments. Frederick came home and saw the new ware, he said to Catherine, 'what have you been about?'

'I have bought them with the yellow buttons which I buried in the stable: I did not go there, the pedlars dug them up themselves.'

'Ah, wife, what have you done! They were not buttons, but pure gold, and all we had. How could you have done such a thing!'

'Oh, Frederick, I did not know; you should have told me.'

Catherine stood awhile thinking, and then said: 'Hark ye, Fred: we will get back the gold; let us run after the thieves.'

'Come,' said Frederick, 'we will try; but take some butter and cheese with you, that we shall have something to eat on our way.'

'Yes, Fred, we will.'

They set out, and as Frederick walked the fastest, Catherine was some way behind. 'It does not matter,' thought she; 'when we turn back I shall be nearer home.' She now came to a hill, and on both sides of the way were deep ruts.

'Ah, see now,' said Catherine, 'how the poor earth is torn up and pressed down; it cannot get well again.' And, full of compassion, she took the butter and smeared the ruts right and left, so that they should not be hurt so much by the wheels; and as she stooped in her pity, a cheese rolled out of her pocket down the hill. Then said Catherine: 'I have been that way once; I will not go down again, another cheese can go and fetch it.' So she took another cheese and rolled it down the hill. But the cheese did not come back, so she threw a third one, saying: 'Perhaps they are waiting for company, and will not go alone.' When all three stayed still, she said: 'I do not know what I should do, yet it may be that the third has not found his way, and has lost itself: I will send a fourth, that it may call it.' But the fourth did no better than the third. Then she became angry, and threw down the fifth and sixth, and they were the last. For some time she stood still, and watched if they would come; but as they did not, she said: 'Oh, you are staying long enough; do you think that I will wait longer for you? I go on my way; you can run after me, as you have younger legs than I have.' So Catherine went on, and found Frederick standing waiting for her, as he wanted something to eat.

'Now give me what you have brought.' She handed him the dry bread. 'Where are the butter and cheese?' asked the husband. 'Oh, Fred,' said Catherine, 'with the butter I have

smeared the cart-ruts, and the cheeses will soon come; away, so I sent the others after it to call it back.' Fred then said: 'You should not have done that, Kate; you not have smeared butter in the road, and rolled the cart down the hill.'

'Oh, Fred, you should have told me!'

They then ate the dry bread together, and Frederick

'Kate, did you fasten up the house when you came away'

'No, Fred; you should have told me to do so.'

'Well, return home before we go further, and bring something to eat. I will wait for you here.' Catherine went back, and thought, 'Fred will like something else to eat does not care for butter and cheese. I will take him a bag of nuts, and a jug of vinegar to drink.' Then she bolted the upper door, but the lower one she took out, and put it on her shoulder, and thought that if the door were kept safe the house would be well secured. Catherine did not hurry herself; she thought, 'Frederick will rest himself so much longer.' When she met him, she said, 'Here is the house for you, Frederick, and now you can take care of the house yourself.'

'Oh,' said he, 'what a clever wife I have! She took the lower door, so that everyone may run in that way; I will bolt the upper one. It is too late now to go back, but I have brought the door, you must carry it.'

'I will carry the door, Fred; but the nuts and vinegar are too heavy for me. I will hang them on the door; you must carry them.' They now went into the wood, and sought for the rogues, but did not find them. Now, as it was dark, they climbed up into a tree, to spend the night there. Hardly had they done so when the fellows came there who find them before they are lost. They settled under the very tree in which Frederick and Catherine were sitting, made a fire, and were going to divide their booty. Frederick slipped down on the other side, and picked up some stones, climbed up again

meant to hit the thieves on the head. But the stones did not hit them, and the rogues called out, 'It will soon be morning; the wind is shaking down the fir-apples. Catherine still had the door on her shoulder, and because it pressed her, she thought it was the fault of the nuts, and said, 'Fred, I must throw down the nuts.'

'No, Kate, not yet; it might betray us.'

'Oh, Fred, I must; they hurt me so!'

'Well, do it.' Then the nuts rolled down through the boughs, and the rogues below said, 'It is hailing.' Soon after, because the door pressed her heavily, she said that she must throw out the vinegar. 'No, Catherine, you must not; it would betray us.'

'Oh, Fred, I must; it is so heavy!'

'Well, then, do so.' She shook out the vinegar, so that it sprinkled the rogues. They said one to the other, 'What a heavy dew there is!' At last Catherine thought it must be the door which was so heavy, and said to Frederick:

'I must throw it down.'

'No, Kate, not yet; it would betray us.'

'Oh, Fred, I must; it is so heavy!'

'No, Catherine; hold it firm.'

'Oh, Fred, I must let it fall!'

'Oh,' said Frederick angrily, 'then let it fall.' It fell with such a clatter upon the thieves that they cried that the demon was coming, and ran away as fast as they could, and left all the gold. In the early morning, as the two came down, they found all their gold, and took it home with them.

When they were again at home Frederick said:

'Kate, you must now be very diligent and work.'

'Yes, Fred, I'll do it; I will go in the field and cut the corn.'

When Catherine went to the field, she said, 'Shall I eat before I cut, or shall I sleep before I cut? I will eat first.' Then Catherine ate and became sleepy and began to cut, and,

half asleep, cut all her clothes in two, apron, frock, &c. As Catherine, after a long sleep, again awoke, she was half naked, and she said to herself :

'Am I myself, or am I not? Oh, I am not myself.' meantime it was night, and Catherine ran into the village, knocked at her husband's door, and called, 'Fred!'

'What is it?'

'I would like to know if Catherine is in?'

'Yes, yes,' answered Frederick; 'she will be lying asleep.' So she said, 'I must be at home,' and ran away.

Outside Catherine met some rogues who wished to see her; she said to them that she would help them. They thought she knew the locality, and were pleased; but Catherine went in front of the houses, and called out, 'People, be careful of anything? We wish to steal.' The rogues thought, 'That's a queer way,' and wished to get rid of her. Then they thought that the parson had some beetroots in his field. 'Go and pull them up for us,' Catherine went to the field, but was too lazy to pull the beetroots quite out. A man was passing who thought she was a demon, so he ran to the parson and said, 'A demon is in your beetroot field, and pulling up the roots.' 'Oh,' said the parson, 'I have a lame foot; I will go and drive him away.' The man said that he would help him, but when they came to the field Catherine stood up and said, 'Oh, a demon!' said the parson; and both ran away. The parson ran faster with his lame foot than the man who carried him with his sound one.

THE QUEEN BEE.

A KING once had two sons, who went out in search of adventures; but they wasted their time and money in dissipation, and never came home again. Their

brother, who was called Simpleton, set out to seek them, but when at length he found them, they mocked him for thinking that such a simpleton as he would fight his way through the world, when they, with all their cleverness, found it a very difficult matter.

They went on, all three together, and on their way they met with an ant-hill. The two elder brothers wanted to overturn the hill, that they might see the little ants running and creeping about in their fright, and carrying their eggs away to a place of safety; but Simpleton said, 'No, no; leave the little creatures in peace; I do not like to see them disturbed.'

They then went on quietly till they came to a lake, on which a large number of ducks were swimming, and the brothers wished to catch one or two for roasting, but the Simpleton said, 'Leave the poor birds in peace; I cannot endure that you should kill any of them.'

At length they came to a bees' nest in a tree, with so much honey that it ran over on the trunk. The two brothers wanted to light a fire under the tree to smother the bees, that they might take away the honey; but the youngest brother held them back. 'Leave the poor insects in peace,' he said; 'I cannot bear to think of their being burnt.'

At last they came to a castle, where in the stables stood horses of pure stone. They went all over the rooms and through the castle, till they reached a door to which were three locks. The centre of this door was glass, through which one could see into the room. They looked, and saw a little gray man sitting at a table. They called to him more than once, but he did not hear till they called a third time. Then he rose up, opened the three locks, and came out. Even then he uttered not a word, but led them to a richly-prepared table, and after they had eaten and drank as much as they wished, he led them each to his own chamber.

The next morning the gray little man came to the eldest brother, made signs to him to follow, and led him to a stone

table, on which were engraved three tasks, by the performance of which the castle could be delivered from the spell under. The first was:

'In the wood under the moss are scattered the pearls of the king's daughter; they are a thousand in number, and



THE CENTRE OF THIS DOOR WAS GLASS.

can find them all in one day, before the sun goes down, to release the castle from its enchantment; but if at sunset a single pearl should be wanting, he who sought for them shall be turned into stone.

The eldest brother searched for the whole day, but

hour of sunset arrived, he had only found a hundred pearls, and, according to the writing on the table, he was turned into stone.

The next day the second brother made an attempt, and began his task in the evening, so that he searched all night and all day, but with very little more success than his brother. By sunset next day he had found only two hundred pearls; he was, therefore, turned into stone.

At last came the turn of the Simpleton to seek amongst the moss; but it was so difficult to find the pearls, that he sat down on a stone and wept. As he sat there weeping, he saw coming towards him the ant-king, whose kingdom and life he had saved, with five thousand of his ants, and it was not long before they had found all the pearls, and piled them up in a large heap. The second task was to fetch the key of the princess's sleeping-chamber from the bottom of the lake into which it had been thrown. When the Simpleton went to the shore of the lake, the ducks whom he had saved dived to the bottom, and in a few moments brought up the key and gave it to him.

The third task was the most difficult of all. He had to go into the room where the king's three daughters were sleeping, find out which was the youngest and most beloved, and wake her. The sisters exactly resembled each other; the only thing by which they could be distinguished was that before they went to sleep the eldest had eaten barley-sugar, the second a little syrup, and the youngest a spoonful of honey. Then came the queen bee, whose community he had saved from the fire, and she went to the mouths of the three sleepers, and quickly discovered the youngest, that had eaten honey. She remained sitting on her mouth, and the youth knew by this which of the king's daughters to awaken. No sooner had he done so than the castle was disenchanted, and all who had been turned to stone resumed their proper forms.

The simple brother married the youngest daughter of the king, and became king after her father's death. His brothers married her two sisters.

THE THREE FEATHERS.

THERE was once a king who had three sons. Two were considered wise and prudent; but the youngest said very little, appeared so silly that he was called Simple. When the king became old and weak, and began to think his end was near, he knew not to which of his sons to leave the kingdom.

So he sent for them, and said, 'Go forth! and he whom I find me the finest carpet shall be king after my death.'

And, that there might be no dispute between them, he sent them out of the castle, and blew three feathers into the air, saying, 'You will travel in whatever direction these feathers take.' One flew to the east and the other to the west; the third soon fell on the earth, and remained there. The two eldest brothers turned one to the right and the other to the left, and they laughed at Simple, because where his feather fell he was obliged to remain.

Simple sat down, feeling very sad; but soon he noticed where his feather lay, a trap-door. He lifted it up, and found a flight of steps, down which he descended, and reached a door. Hearing voices within, he knocked hastily. They were singing:

'Little frogs, crooked legs,
Where do you hide?
Go and see quickly
Who is outside.'

At this the door opened of itself, and the youth saw a fat frog, seated with a number of little frogs round her. On seeing him, the large frog asked what he wanted. 'I have a great wish for the finest and most beautiful that can be got,' he replied. Then the old frog called her little ones:

'Little frogs, crooked legs,
Run here and there ;
Bring me the large bag
That hangs over there.'

The young frogs fetched the bag, and when it was opened the old frog took from it a carpet so fine, and so beautifully worked, that nothing on earth could equal it. This she gave to the young man, who thanked her, and went away up the steps.

Meanwhile, his elder brothers, quite believing that their foolish brother would not be able to get any carpet at all, said one to another, 'We need not take the trouble to go farther, and seek for anything very wonderful ; ours is sure to be the best.' And, as the first person they met was a shepherd, wearing a shepherd's plaid, they bought the large plaid cloth, and carried it home to the king.

At the same time the youngest brother returned with his beautiful carpet, and when the king saw it he was astonished, and said, 'If justice is done, then the kingdom belongs to my youngest son.'

But the two elder brothers gave the king no peace ; they said it was impossible for Simple to become king, for his understanding failed in everything, and they begged their father to make another condition.

At last he said, 'Whoever finds the most beautiful ring, and brings it to me, shall have the kingdom.'

He then led out the brothers a second time, and blew three feathers into the air to direct their way. The feathers of the two eldest flew east and west, but that of the youngest fell, as before, near the trap-door, and there rested. He at once descended the steps, and told the great frog that he wanted a most beautiful ring. She sent for her large bag, and drew from it a ring, which sparkled with precious stones, and was so beautiful that no goldsmith on earth could make one like it.

The elder brothers had again laughed at Simple, and said,

'As if he could ever find a gold ring!' So they gave them no trouble, but merely took a plated ring from the harness of the carriage-horse, and brought it to their father.

But when the king saw Simple's splendid ring, he said at once, 'The kingdom belongs to my youngest son.'

His brothers, however, were not yet inclined to give up the decision; they begged their father to make a condition, and at last he promised that he would give the kingdom to the son who brought home the most beautiful woman for his wife.

They all were again guided by the feathers, and the eldest took the roads pointed out to them. But Simple, without hesitation, went at once to the frog, and said: 'I am to take home the most beautiful woman.'

'Hey-day!' said the frog, 'I have not one by me at present, but you shall have one soon.' So she gave him a carrot which had been hollowed out, and to which six mice were fastened.

Simple took it quite sorrowfully, and said: 'What shall I do with this?'

'Seat one of my little frogs in it,' she said.

The youth, on this, caught one up at a venture, and put it in the carrot. No sooner had he done so, than it became the most beautiful young lady; the carrot was turned into a coach, and the mice were changed to horses.

He kissed the maiden, drove away to the castle, and presented her to the king.

His brothers came also. They had taken no more notice of the feathers than before, and merely chose the handsomest peasant girls they could find to bring to their father.

When the king saw the beautiful maiden his youngest son had brought, he said, 'The kingdom must now be given to my youngest son after my death.'

But the eldest brothers deafened the king's ears with their cries, 'We cannot consent to let our stupid youngest son be king; give us one more trial. Let a ring be hung in the air, and the son who brings it first shall be king.'

and let each woman spring through it.' For they thought the peasant maidens would easily manage to do this, because they were strong, and that the delicate lady would, no doubt, kill herself. To this trial the old king consented.

The peasant maidens jumped first, but they were so heavy and awkward that they fell, and broke arms and legs. But the beautiful lady whom Simple had brought home sprung as lightly as a deer through the ring, and thus put an end to all opposition.

The youngest brother married the beautiful maiden, and after his father's death ruled the kingdom for many years with great wisdom.

THE GOLDEN GOOSE.

THERE was a man who had three sons, the youngest of whom was considered very silly, and everybody used to mock him and make fun of him. The eldest son wanted to go and cut wood in the forest, and before he left home his mother prepared beautiful pancakes and a bottle of wine for him to take with him, so that he might not suffer from hunger or thirst.

As he entered the forest he met a gray old man, who bade him 'Good-morning,' and said: 'Give me a little piece of cake out of your basket and a drop of wine out of your bottle, for I am very hungry and thirsty.'

But the clever son replied: 'What, give you my cake and my wine! Why, if I did, I should have none for myself. Not I, indeed, so take yourself off!' and he left the man standing and went on.

The young man began cutting down a tree, but it was not long before he made a false stroke: the axe slipped and cut his arm so badly that he was obliged to go home and have it

bound up. Now, this false stroke was caused by the little old man.

Next day the second son went into the forest to cut wood and his mother gave him a cake and a bottle of wine. As he entered the wood the same little old man met him, and begged for a piece of cake and a drop of wine. But the second son answered rudely: 'What I might give to you I shall want for myself, so be off.'

Then he left the little old man standing in the road, and walked on. His punishment soon came. He had just given two strokes on a tree with his axe, when he hit his head with such a terrible blow that he was obliged to limp home in great pain.

'Then the stupid son said to his father, 'Let me go for wood and cut wood in the forest.'

But his father said: 'No; your brothers have been in the wood already, and it would be worse for you, who don't understand wood-cutting.'

The boy, however, begged so hard to be allowed to go that his father said: 'There, get along with you; you will value your experience very dearly, I expect.'

His mother, however, gave him a cake which had been baked with water and baked in the ashes, and a bottle of sour beer.

When he reached the wood the very same little old man met him, and after greeting him kindly, said: 'Give me a little of your cake and a drop from your bottle, for I am very hungry and thirsty.'

'Oh,' replied the simple youth, 'I have only a cake which has been baked in the ashes and some sour beer; but you are welcome to a share of it. Let us sit down, and eat and drink together.'

So they seated themselves, and, lo and behold! when the youth opened his basket, the cake had been turned into a beautiful cake, and the sour beer into wine. After they had eaten and drunk enough, the little old man said: 'Because

have been kind-hearted, and shared your dinner with me, I will make you in future lucky in all you undertake. There stands an old tree; cut it down, and you will find something good at the root.'

Then the old man said 'Farewell,' and left him.

The youth set to work, and very soon succeeded in felling the tree, when he found sitting at the roots a goose, whose feathers were of pure gold. He took it up, and, instead of going home, carried it with him to an inn at a little distance, where he intended to pass the night.

The landlord had three daughters, who looked at the goose with envious eyes. They had never seen such a wonderful bird, and longed to have at least one of its feathers. 'Ah,' thought the eldest, 'I shall soon have an opportunity to pluck one of them;' and so it happened, for not long after the young man left the room. She instantly went up to the bird and took hold of its wing, but as she did so, the finger and thumb remained and stuck fast. In a short time after the second sister came in, with the full expectation of gaining a golden feather, but as she touched her, sister to move her from the bird, her hand stuck fast to her sister's dress, and neither of them could free herself. At last in came the third sister, with the same intention. 'Keep away, keep away!' screamed the other two; 'in Heaven's name keep away!'

But she could not imagine why she should keep away. If they were near the golden bird, why should not she be there? So she made a spring forward and touched her second sister, and immediately she also was made a prisoner, and in this position they were obliged to remain by the goose all night.

In the morning the young man came in, took the goose on his arm, and went away without troubling himself about the three girls, who were following close behind him. And as he walked quickly, they were obliged to run one behind the other, left or right of him, just as he was inclined to go.

In the middle of a field they were met by the parson of the

parish, who looked with wonder at the procession as it came near him. 'Shame on you!' he cried out. 'What are you about, you bold-faced hussies, running after a young man that way through the fields? Go home, all of you.'

He placed his hand on the youngest to pull her back, but the moment he touched her he also became fixed, and was obliged to follow and run like the rest. In a few minutes the clerk met them, and when he saw the parson running after the girls, he wondered greatly, and cried out, 'Halloa, parson, where are you running in such haste? Have you forgotten that there is a christening to-day?' And as the procession did not stop, he ran after it, and seized the parson's gown.

In a moment he found that his hand was fixed, and he had to run like the rest. And now there were five trotting along, one behind the other. Presently two peasants came with their sickles from the field. The parson called out to them, and begged them to come and release him and the clerk. Hardly had they touched the clerk when they also stuck fast as the others, and the simpleton with his golden goose trotted with the seven.

After awhile they came to a city in which reigned a king who had a daughter of such a melancholy disposition that no one could make her laugh; therefore he issued a decree that whoever would make the princess laugh should have her in marriage.

Now, when the simple youth heard this, he ran before her and the whole seven trotted after him. The sight was so ridiculous that the moment the princess saw it she burst into a violent fit of laughter, and they thought she would never leave off.

After this, the youth went to the king, and demanded his daughter in marriage, according to the king's decree; but the majesty did not quite like to have the young man for a son-in-law, so he said that, before he could consent to the marriage,

the youth must bring him a man who could drink all the wine in the king's cellar.

The simpleton went into the forest, for he thought, 'If any one can help me, it is the little gray man.' When he arrived at the spot where he had cut down the tree, there stood a man with a very miserable face.

The youth asked him why he looked so sorrowful.



SHE BURST INTO A VIOLENT FIT OF LAUGHTER.

'Oh,' he exclaimed, 'I suffer such dreadful thirst that nothing seems able to quench it; and cold water I cannot endure. I have emptied a cask of wine already, but it was just like a drop of water on a hot stone.'

'I can help you,' cried the young man; 'come with me, and you shall have your fill, I promise you.'

Upon this he led the man into the king's cellar, where he opened the casks one after another, and drank and drank till his back ached; and before the day closed he had quite emptied the king's cellar.

Again the young man asked for his bride, but the king was annoyed at the thought of giving his daughter to such a common fellow, and to get rid of him he made another condition. He said that no man should have his daughter who could not find someone able to eat up a whole mountain of bread.

Away went the simpleton to the forest as before, and there in the same place sat a man binding himself round tightly with a belt, and making the most horrible faces. As the youth approached, he cried, 'I have eaten a whole ovenful of bread, but it has not satisfied me a bit; I am as hungry as ever. My stomach feels so empty that I am obliged to bind it round tightly, or I should die of hunger.'

The simpleton could hardly contain himself for joy when he heard this. 'Get up,' he exclaimed, 'and come with me. I will give you plenty to eat, I'll warrant.'

So he led him to the king's court, where his majesty ordered all the flour in the kingdom to be made into bread and piled up in a huge mountain. The hungry man placed himself before the bread, and began to eat, and before evening the whole pile had disappeared.

Then the simpleton went a third time to the king, and asked for his bride, but the king made several excuses, and at last said that if he could bring him a ship that would travel as fast by land as by water, then he should, without any further conditions, marry his daughter.

The youth went at once straight to the forest, and showed the same old gray man to whom he had given his cake. 'All right,' said, as the youth approached, 'it was I who sent the cake to eat and drink, and I will also give you a ship that can travel by land or by sea, because when you thought I was poor, you were kind-hearted, and gave me food and drink.'

The youth took the ship, and when the king saw it he was quite surprised; but he could not any longer refuse to give him his daughter in marriage. The wedding was celebrated with great pomp, and after the king's death the simple woodcutter inherited the whole kingdom, and lived happily with his wife.

THE PRINCESS IN DISGUISE.

A KING once had a wife with golden hair, who was so beautiful that none on earth could be found equal to her. It happened that she fell ill, and as soon as she knew she must die, she sent for the king, and said to him, 'After my death, I know you will marry another wife; but you must promise me that, however beautiful she may be, if she is not as beautiful as I am, and has not golden hair like mine, you will not marry her.'

The king had no sooner given his promise than she closed her eyes and died.

For a long time he refused to be comforted, and thought it was impossible he could ever take another wife. At length his counsellors came to him, and said, 'A king should not remain unmarried; we ought to have a queen.'

So he at last consented, and then messengers were sent far and wide, to find a bride whose beauty should equal that of the dead queen. But none was to be found in the whole world; for, even when equally beautiful, they had not golden hair.

So the messengers returned without obtaining what they sought.

Now, the king had a daughter who was quite as beautiful as her dead mother, and had also golden hair. She had all this while been growing up, and very soon the king noticed how exactly she resembled her dead mother. So he sent for his

counsellors, and said to them, 'I will marry my daughter; she is the image of my dead wife, and no other bride can be found to enable me to keep my promise to her.'

When the counsellors heard this, they were dread-ly shocked, and said, 'It is forbidden for a father to marry his daughter; nothing but evil could spring from such a sin, and the kingdom will be ruined.'

The king's daughter was still more frightened at her father's proposition, but she hoped to dissuade him from carrying out his intention, so she said to him, 'Before I consent to your wish, I shall require three things—a dress as golden as the sun, another as silvery as the moon, and a third as glittering as the stars; and besides this, I shall require a mantle made of a thousand skins of rough fur sewn together, and every animal in the kingdom must give a piece of his skin towards it.'

'Ah,' she thought, 'I have asked for impossibilities, and I hope I shall be able to make my father give up his wild intentions.'

The king, however, was not to be diverted from his purpose. All the most skilful young women in the kingdom were employed to weave the three dresses—one to be as golden as the sun, another as silvery as the moon, and the third as glittering as the stars. He sent hunters into the forest to kill the wild animals, and bring home their skins, of which the mantle was to be made, and at last, when all was finished, he brought them and laid them before her, and then said: 'To-morrow our marriage shall take place.'

Then the king's daughter saw that there was no hope of changing her father's heart, so she determined to run away from the castle.

In the night, when everyone slept, she rose and took from her jewel-case a gold ring, a gold spinning-wheel, and a golden hook. The three dresses of the sun, moon, and stars she folded in so small a parcel that they were placed in a water-shell; then she put on the fur mantle, stained her face and

hands black with walnut juice, and committing herself to the care of heaven, she left her home, and travelled the whole night until she came at last to a large forest, and feeling very tired, she crept into a hollow tree and went to sleep. The sun rose, but she still slept on, and did not wake till nearly noon.

It happened on this very day that the king to whom the wood belonged was hunting in the forest, and when his hounds came to the tree, they sniffed about, and ran round and round the tree, barking loudly. The king called to his hunters and said: 'Just go and see what animal the dogs are barking at.'

They obeyed, and, quickly returning, told the king that in the hollow tree was a most wonderful creature, such as they had never seen before, that the skin was covered with a thousand different sorts of fur, and that it was fast asleep.

'Then,' said the king, 'go and see if you can capture it alive, then bind it on the waggon, and bring it home.'

While the hunters were binding the maiden, she awoke, and, full of terror, cried out to them: 'I am only a poor child, forsaken by my father and mother; take pity on me, and take me with you.'

'Well,' they replied, 'you may be useful to the cook, little Roughskin. Come with us; you can at least sweep up the ashes.'

So they seated her on the waggon, and took her home to the king's castle. They showed her a little stable under the steps, where no daylight ever came, and said: 'Roughskin, here you can live and sleep.' So the king's daughter was sent into the kitchen to fetch the wood, draw the water, stir the fire, pluck the fowls, look after the vegetables, sweep the ashes, and do all the hard work.

Poor Roughskin, as they called her, lived for a long time most miserably, and the beautiful king's daughter knew not when it would end or how. It happened, however, after a time that a festival was to take place in the castle, so she said

to the cook: 'May I go out for a little while to see the company arrive? I will stand outside the door.'

'Yes, you may go,' he replied; 'but in half an hour I shall want you to sweep up the ashes, and put the kitchen in order.'

Then she took her little oil lamp, went into the stable, took off the fur coat, and washed the nut stains from her face and hands, so that her full beauty appeared before the day. Then this she opened the nutshell and took out the dress that shined as golden as the sun, and put it on. As soon as she was dressed, she went out and presented herself at the entrance of the castle as a visitor. No one recognised her as Roughskin; they thought she was a king's daughter. The king went to receive her, offered her his hand, and while they danced together he thought in his heart, 'My eyes have never seen any maiden before so beautiful as this.'

As soon as the dance was over she bowed to the king, and before he could look round she had vanished, no one knew where. The sentinel at the castle gate was called and questioned, but he had not seen anyone pass.

But she had run to her stable, quickly removed her stained face and hands, put on her fur coat, and was again Roughskin. When she entered the kitchen and began to do her work and sweep up the ashes, the cook said: 'Leave me alone till to-morrow; I want you to cook some soup for the king, for I wish to go upstairs and take a look; but do not let one of your hairs fall in, or you will get nothing to eat in the morning from me.'

Then the cook went out, and Roughskin made the soup as nicely as she could, and cut bread for it, and when it was ready, she fetched from her little stable her gold ring, and laid it in the dish in which the soup was prepared.

After the king had left the ball-room, he called for the soup, and while eating it, thought he had never tasted better in his life. But when the dish was nearly empty, he saw to his surprise a gold ring lying at the bottom, and could not

how it came there. Then he ordered the cook to come to him, and he was in a fright when he heard the order: 'You must certainly have let a hair fall into the soup; if you have, I shall thrash you,' he said.

As soon as he appeared, the king said: 'Who cooked this soup?'

'I cooked it,' he replied.

'That is not true,' said the king; 'this soup is made quite differently and much better than you ever made it.'

Then the cook was obliged to confess that Roughskin had made the soup.

'Go and send her to me,' said the king.

As soon as she appeared, the king said to her, 'Who art thou, maiden?'

She replied, 'I am a poor child without father or mother.'

He asked again, 'Why are you in my castle?'

'Because I am trying to earn my bread by helping the cook,' she replied.

'How came this ring in the soup?' he said again.

'I know nothing about the ring,' she replied.

When the king found he could learn nothing from Roughskin he sent her away. A little time after this there was another festival, and Roughskin had again permission from the cook to go and see the visitors; 'but,' he added, 'come back in half an hour and cook for the king the soup that he is so fond of.'

She promised to return, and ran quickly into her little stable, washed off the stains, and took out of the nutshell her dress, silvery as the moon, and put it on. Then she appeared at the castle like a king's daughter, and the king came to receive her with great pleasure, he was so glad to see her again, and while the dancing continued the king kept her as his partner. When the ball ended she disappeared so quickly that the king could not imagine what had become of her. But she had rushed down to her stable, made herself again the rough little creature

that was called Roughskin, and went into the kitchen to eat the soup.

While the cook was upstairs she fetched the golden spinning-wheel and dropped it into the soup as soon as it was ready. The king again ate it with great relish; it was as good as before, and when he sent for the cook and asked who made it, he was obliged to own that it was Roughskin. She was then ordered to appear before the king, but he could get nothing of her, excepting that she was a poor child, and knew nothing of the golden spinning-wheel.

At the king's third festival everything happened as before. But the cook said: 'I will let you go and see the dancing-maiden this time, Roughskin, but I believe you are a witch, for although the soup is good, and the king says it is better than I can make it, there is always something dropped into it which I cannot understand.' Roughskin did not stop to listen; she ran quickly to her little stable, washed off the nut-stains, and this time dressed herself in the dress that glittered like the stars. When the king came as before to receive her in the hall, he thought he had never seen such a beautiful woman in his life. While they were dancing, he contrived, without being noticed by the maiden, to slip a gold ring on her finger, and he had given orders that the dancing should continue longer than usual. When it ended, he wanted to hold her hand still, but she pulled it away, and sprang so quickly among the people that she vanished from his eyes.

She ran out of breath to her stable under the steps, for she knew that she had remained longer away than half an hour, and there was not time to take off her dress, so she threw over her fur cloak over it, and in her haste she did not make her face black enough, nor hide her golden hair properly; her hands also remained white. However, when she entered the kitchen the cook was still away, so she prepared the king's soup, and dropped into it the golden hook.

The king, when he found another trinket in his soup, and

immediately for Roughskin, and as she entered the room he saw the ring on her white finger which he had placed there. Instantly he seized her hand and held her fast, but in her struggles to get free the fur mantle opened and the star-glittering dress was plainly seen. The king caught the mantle and tore it off, and as he did so her golden hair fell over her shoulders, and she stood before him in her full splendour, and felt that she could no longer conceal who she was. Then she wiped the soot and stains from her face, and was beautiful to the eyes of the king as any woman upon earth.

'You shall be my dear bride,' said the king, 'and we will never be parted again, although I know not who you are.'

Then the marriage was celebrated, and they lived happily till their death.

THE HARE'S BRIDE.

THERE was once a woman and her daughter who lived in a pretty cabbage-garden. But a hare came into it in the winter, and ate the cabbages all up.

Then said the mother to the daughter, 'Go into the garden and drive away the hare.'

The maiden said, 'Shoo, shoo, little hare, you are eating up all our cabbages.'

The little hare said, 'Maiden, seat thyself on my tail and come with me to my little hut.' But the maiden would not.

The next day the hare came again and ate the cabbages.

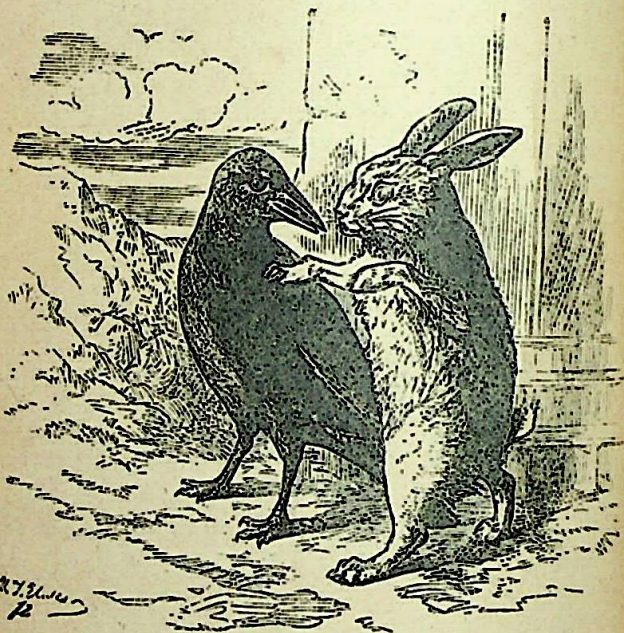
Then the woman said to her daughter, 'Go into the garden and drive the hare away.'

The girl said to the little hare, 'Shoo, shoo, you little hare; you eat up all the cabbages.'

Said the little hare, 'Come, maiden, sit on my tail and go with me to my little home.' But the maiden would not.

On the third day the little hare came again and ate the cabbages. Then said the woman to her daughter, 'Go to the garden and drive out the hare.'

The girl went and said, 'Shoo, shoo, you little hare, you eat all the cabbages.' The hare said, 'Maiden, sit on my back and come with me into my little hut.' The girl seated herself on the hare's tail, and the hare took her away to his little hut and said, 'Now cook green cabbages and millet seed, and I will



BUT THE CROW WAS THERE TOO.

invite the wedding guests.' Then all the wedding guests assembled. (Who were the wedding guests? I can tell you as it was told to me. They were all hares; but the crow was there, too, to marry the bridal pair, and the fox as clerk, and the altar was under a rainbow.) The girl, however, was not for she was all alone. The little hare came and said, 'Open the doors, open the doors; the wedding guests are coming.'

The bride said nothing, but wept. The little hare went away, but came back, and said, 'Open, open; the wedding guests are waiting.' The bride said nothing, and the little hare again went away. Then the bride made a doll of straw, dressed it in her clothes, put a stick in her hand to stir with, placed her at the kettle with the millet seed, and went back to her mother. The little hare came once more, and said, 'Take off the lid, take off the lid,' and struck the doll on the head so that her cap flew off.

Then the little hare saw that it was not his bride, and went away sorrowful.

THE THIEF AND HIS MASTER.

JOHN wished to put his son to learn a trade, so he went into the church and prayed to know what would be best for the lad. Then the clerk got behind the altar, and said, 'Stealing, stealing.' So John went back to his son and told him that he must learn to steal, for he had heard it in the church; and they both went to seek a man who could teach him to steal. They went a long way, and came at last to a great wood where there was a little hut with an old woman in it. John asked her, 'Do you know a man who can teach stealing?'

'You can learn it well here,' said the woman; 'my son is a master of it.'

So he spoke to the son and asked him whether he knew stealing well. The master thief answered, 'I will teach your son well, so that, if you come in a year and recognise him, I will have no apprentice fee; but if you don't recognise him, then you must give me two hundred dollars.'

The father went home, and the son learned witchcraft and stealing. When the year ended, the father was anxious to find

out how to recognise his son. As he went grumbling along a little mannikin met him, and said, 'Man, what grieves you? What is troubling you?' 'Oh,' said John, 'a year ago I lost my son with a master thief who told me to go back when a year was out, and that then, if I did not know my son when I saw him, I was to pay two hundred dollars; but, if I did know him, then I should pay nothing. Now, I fear I shall not know him, and I don't know where to get the money.'

Then the mannikin told him to take a basket of bread with him and to go and stand near the fireplace. 'There,' he said, 'on the cross-beam, is a basket, out of which a little bird is peeping; that is your son.'

So John took a basket of black bread and put it in front of the basket with the bird in it. Then the bird came out and looked up. 'Hallo, my son, are you there?' said the father. And the son was glad to see his father, but the master thief said, 'The devil must have told you, or how did you know your son?' 'Father, let us go,' said the young man. Then the father and son went homewards. On the way a carriage was driving fast by. The son said to his father, 'I will climb myself into a large greyhound, and then you can earn money with me.' Then the gentleman in the carriage called out: 'My man, will you sell your dog?' 'Yes,' said the father. 'How much do you ask for him?' 'Thirty dollars.' 'Well, that is too much, but as it is a fine dog I will have it!'

The gentleman took the dog into his carriage, but when he had driven on a little way it leaped out of the carriage and was no more a dog, and went back to his father.

They went home together. The following day there was a market in the next town; and the young man said: 'I will now change into a beautiful horse, and you can sell me; but when I am sold you must take off my bridle, or I shall become a man again.' Then the father took the horse to the market, and the master thief bought it for a hundred dollars, but the father forgot to take off the bridle. The man went

with his horse and put it in the stable. When, by-and-by, the maid crossed the threshold, the horse said to her: 'Take off my bridle; take off my bridle!' The maid stood still, and whispered: 'What! can you speak?' Then she went and took off the bridle, and the horse became a sparrow, and flew over the roofs. The wizard became a sparrow also, and flew after him; then they came together and cast lots, and the master lost, and went into the water and became a fish. The young man also became a fish, and they cast lots again, and the master lost. Then the master changed himself into a cock, and the young man became a fox and bit his master's head off; so he died, and remains dead to this day.

THE FORTUNE-SEEKERS.

A FATHER once sent for his three sons, and gave to the first a cock, to the second a scythe, and to the third a cat. 'I am old,' he said, 'my death is near, and I wish to prepare for my end. I have no money to leave you; and what I now give you is very little: it depends upon yourselves to turn it to some good account, if you understand how to employ it rightly. Seek a country where such things as these are unknown, and you will each make a fortune.'

After the father's death the eldest son started on his enterprise, and went through many towns where the cock was a well-known bird. Sometimes he saw at a distance one even sitting on the top of a tower and turning round with the wind.

In the villages it was the same. He heard the cocks crowing, and no one thought his bird at all wonderful. There seemed, therefore, no prospect of a fortune being made through the cock.

At last he chanced to visit an island where the bird was un-

known, and they had no division of time. They knew what was morning and evening; but at night if they did not know they had no way of finding out the hour.

'See!' said he, 'what a proud creature this is! It has a ruby-red crown on its head, and wears spurs like a knight; it also calls out three times in the night to tell the hour, and its third time is just before sunrise. If it should call out during the day-time we may be sure of a change in the weather.'

The people of the island were so pleased that none of them slept all night, and as they lay awake they heard the cock



THE THREE SONS WITH THE COCK, THE SCYTHE, AND THE CAT.

out the time quite loudly and clearly at two, four, and six o'clock. They asked the owner if the creature was to be sold, and how much he wanted for it.

'About as much gold as an ass could carry,' he replied.

'A very low price for such a valuable creature,' they said; they collected the money and gave him willingly what he asked.

When he returned home with all his wealth his brothers wondered, and the second said, 'I think I may as well go and try if I can make as good a bargain for my scythe.'

At first, however, on starting, he did not meet with much

encouragement. The farmers and labourers whom he met had on their shoulders scythes as good as his own.

At last he succeeded in reaching an island where the people had never heard of a scythe. When they wanted to reap their corn they brought out cannons and shot it down. It certainly was a very singular proceeding, for many ears of corn fell outside, and others were struck off and shot away, so that few fell on the ground to be gathered up; and, above all, the cannons made a dreadful noise.

On seeing all this the young man placed himself in a corn-field, and cut it down so quietly and swiftly with his scythe that the people were struck dumb with wonder, and were willing to give him whatever he asked for his scythe. Then he said he would be satisfied with as much gold as a horse could carry, and this they readily gave him.

The youngest thought he would also try his fortune with puss, if he could find the right way. It was the same with him as with the others: as long as he remained inland it was all useless. There were cats in every town, and in some places so numerous that the kittens were always drowned as soon as they were born.

At last he took ship and crossed over to an island, and came luckily to a place where they had never even seen a cat, and the mice had so gained the upper hand that they did as they pleased. They scampered over the tables and chairs whether the master was present or not.

The people complained terribly of this plague. The king, even, in his castle, could do nothing to remove them, for in every corner, whether of cottage or castle, the mice picked and gnawed everything which their teeth could lay hold of. Then the young man sent the cat amongst them, and she soon cleared several houses of the mice, by killing them or driving them away.

The people begged the king to buy the wonderful animal for the sake of his kingdom. The king was quite willing to give

what the owner asked, and the young man returned home with the largest treasure of them all—he had as much gold as a mule could carry. The cat made herself quite at home in the king's castle; she had mice to her heart's desire, and more than they were able to count. At last such hard work made her thirsty, so she stood still, lifted up her head, and cried, 'Mew—mew.'

The king immediately sent for all his attendants, and, when puss again uttered the same cry, they were quite frightened and rushed away from the castle.

Then the king held a council as to what was best to be done. At last it was resolved to send a herald to the cat to request her to leave the castle, or, if she would not go, to expel her by force.

'For,' said the judge, 'it would be better to dwell as we have before, plagued by mice, and endure the evil, than have our lives sacrificed to such a monster.'

A page was therefore told to go to the cat, and ask her if she would leave the castle of her own free will; but the cat, whose thirst had become still greater, merely answered, 'Mew—mew.'

The page, who understood her to say 'Not in the least,' carried the answer to the king.

'Now,' said the council, 'we must use force.' So the cannons were brought out, and the first shot fired into the room where the cat was sitting. In a great fright, she flew through the window and made her escape. The besiegers, however, did not know she was gone, and continued to fire upon the castle till it was completely razed to the ground.

THE WOLF AND THE MAN.

A fox was one day speaking to a wolf of the great strength of men. 'No animal can stand against them,' he said, 'unless he employs cunning.'

'Then,' said the wolf, 'I only wish I could see a man. I know he should not escape me.'

'I can help you to do that,' said the fox. 'If you come to me early to-morrow morning, I will show you one.'

The wolf took care to be early enough, and the fox led him to the road where he knew huntsmen passed every day.

First came by an old pensioner.

'Is that a man?' asked the wolf.

'No,' answered the fox; 'not now: he was once.'

Then a little child passed, who was going to school.

'Is that a man?' he asked again.

'No, not yet,' said the fox; 'but he will be one by-and-by.'

At last a hunter appeared, with his double-barrelled gun on his shoulder, and his hunting-knife by his side.

'There!' cried the fox, 'see, there comes a man at last! I will leave him to you to manage, but I shall run back to my hole.'

The wolf rushed out upon the man, but the hunter when he saw him said to himself, 'What a pity my gun is not loaded with ball!'

However, he fired the small shot in the animal's face as he sprang at him; but neither the pain nor the noise seemed to frighten the wolf in the least. The hunter fired again; still the wolf made another spring—this time furiously—but the hunter, hastily drawing his bowie-knife, gave him two or three such powerful stabs that he ran back to the fox all covered with blood.

'Well, brother wolf, how did you succeed with a man?'

'Oh,' he cried, 'I had not the least idea of a man's strength. First he took a stick from his shoulder, and blew something at my face, which tingled dreadfully; he puffed again through his stick, and there came a flash of lightning, and something struck my nose like hailstones. I would not give in, but rushed again upon him. In a moment he pulled a white stick out of his body, and gave me such dreadful cuts with it that I believe I must lie here and die.'

'See, now,' said the fox, 'how foolish it is to boast. You have thrown your axe so far that you cannot fetch it back.'

THE WOLF AND THE FOX.

A WOLF once made friends with a fox, so that whatever the wolf wanted the fox was obliged to do, because he was the weakest, and could not, therefore, be master. It happened one day that they were both passing through a wood, and the wolf said, 'Red fox, find me something to eat, or I shall eat you.'

'Well,' replied the fox, 'I know a farmyard near, in which there are two young lambs; if you like I will go and fetch one.' The wolf was quite agreeable, so the fox went to the field, stole the lamb, and brought it to the wolf, and went away.

The wolf soon ate up the lamb, but he was not satisfied and wanted the other lamb, so he went to fetch it himself. But he managed so awkwardly that the mother of the lamb saw him, and began to cry and bleat fearfully; and the farmer came running out. The wolf got so terribly beaten that he ran limping and howling back to the fox. 'You have led me into a pretty mess,' he said. 'I wanted the other lamb, and because I went to fetch it the farmer has nearly killed me.'

'Why are you such a glutton, then?' replied the fox.

Next day, as they were in a field, the greedy wolf exclaimed, 'Red fox, if you don't find me something to eat, I shall eat you up.'

'Oh! I can get you some pancakes, if you like,' he said; 'for I know a farmhouse where the wife is frying them now.'

So they went on together, and the fox sneaked into the house, sniffed, and smelt about for some time, till he at last found out where the dish stood. Then he dragged six pancakes from it, and brought them to the wolf.

'Now you have something to eat,' said the fox, and went away.

The wolf, however, swallowed the pancakes in the twinkling of an eye, and said to himself, 'They taste so good I must have some more.' So he went into the farm kitchen, and, while pulling down the pancakes, upset the dish, and broke it in pieces.

The farmer's wife heard the crash, and came rushing out; but when she saw the wolf, she called loudly for the farm servants, who came rushing in, and beat him with whatever they could lay their hands on, so that he ran back to the fox in the wood with two lame legs, howling terribly.

'How could you serve me such a dirty trick?' he said. 'The farmer nearly caught me; and he has given me such a thrashing.'

'Well, then,' replied the fox, 'you should not be such a glutton.'

Another day, when the wolf and the fox were out together, and the wolf was limping with fatigue, he said, 'Red fox, find me something to eat, or I shall eat you.'

The fox replied, 'I know a man who has been slaughtering cattle to-day; and there is a quantity of salted meat lying in a tub in the cellar. I can fetch some of that.'

'No,' said the wolf; 'let me go with you this time. You can help me if I cannot run away fast enough.'

'You may come for aught I care,' replied Reynard, and showed the way; and at last they reached the cellar safely.

There was meat in abundance. The wolf made himself quite at home, and said, 'There will be time to stop when I hear any sound.'

The fox also enjoyed himself; but he kept looking now and then, and ran often to the hole through which he had entered to try if it was still large enough for his body to slip through.

'Dear fox,' said the wolf, 'why are you running about jumping here and there so constantly?'

'I must see if anyone is coming,' replied the cunning animal, 'and I advise you not to eat too much.'

The wolf replied, 'I am not going away from here till the tub is empty.'

At this moment in came the farmer, who had heard the fox jumping about in the cellar. The fox no sooner saw him than with a spring he was through the hole. The wolf made an attempt to follow him; but he had eaten so much, and was so fat, that he stuck fast. The farmer on seeing this fetched a cudgel and killed him on the spot. The fox ran home to his den full of joy that he was at last set free from the old gluttonous company.

THE WOLF AND GODFATHER FOX

THE wolf, who had a young cub, invited the fox to be godfather. 'He is nearly related to us,' said she, 'has good sense and skill, and can teach my son how to get on in the world.' The fox also appeared quite honest, and said, 'My dear Gossip, I thank you for the honour you have done me. I will so behave that you will have cause to be pleased.' At the feast he enjoyed himself, and became quite jolly; afterwards

he said, 'Dear Mrs. Gossip, it is our duty to take care of the child; she must have good nourishment in order that she may get strong. I know a sheep from which I can easily fetch a nice piece.'

This saying pleased the wolf, and she went with the fox to the farmyard. He showed a fold in the distance, and said, 'You can creep in there unseen, and I will look about on the other side to see if I can perceive a dog.'

However, he did not go there, but went to the entrance of the wood and rested. The wolf crept into the stable, where lay a dog, who made such a noise that the peasants came running out and caught Mrs. Gossip, and poured a strong caustic mixture, which had been prepared for washing, over her skin. At last she escaped, and got away.

The fox began to complain, and say, 'Oh, dear Gossip, how badly I have been treated! The servants have attacked me, and broken all my limbs. If you do not wish me to lie here and die you must carry me away.'

The wolf could hardly drag herself along; still, she had great anxiety about the fox, so she took him on her back, and carried the godfather (who was safe and sound) slowly to her house.

Then he called out, 'Farewell, dear Gossip, and may the roasting you have had do you good!' laughed heartily, and ran away.

THE FOX AND THE CAT.

ONE day a cat met a fox in the wood. 'Ah,' she thought, 'he is clever, and sensible, and well-spoken; I will speak to him.' So she said, quite in a friendly manner, 'Good-morning, dear Mr. Fox; how are you? and how do affairs go with you in these expensive times?'

The fox, full of pride, looked at the cat from head to tail and knew hardly what to say to her for a long time. At last he said, 'Oh, you poor little whisker-cleaner, you old tabby, you hungry mouse-hunter, what are you thinking of to come to me, and to stand there and ask me how I am getting on? What have you learnt, and how many tricks do you know?'



THE CAT SPRANG NIMBLY UP A TREE.

'I only know one trick,' answered the cat meekly.

'And pray what is that?' he asked.

'Well,' she said, 'if the hounds are behind me, I can spring up into a tree out of their way, and save myself.'

'Is that all?' cried the fox; 'why, I am master of a hundred tricks, and have, over and above all, a sackful of cunning; I pity you, puss, so come with me, and I will teach you how to battle the hounds.'

At this moment a hunter with four hounds was seen approaching. The cat sprang nimbly up a tree, and seated herself on the highest branch, where, by the spreading foliage, she was quite concealed.

'Turn out the sack, Mr. Fox; turn out the sack!' cried the cat; but the hounds had already seized him, and held him fast.

'Ah, Mr. Fox,' cried the cat, 'your hundred tricks are not of much use to you; now, if you had only known one like mine, you would not have so quickly lost your life.'

CLEVER MAGGIE.

THERE was once a cook named Maggie who had shoes with red heels, and when she went out of doors, she would draw herself up and walk proudly, and say to herself, 'I really am a handsome maiden.' When she came home she would drink a glass of wine, and as wine and air gave her an appetite, she would eat up all the best things till she was satisfied, and say to herself, 'The cook ought to know the taste of everything.'

One day her master said to her, 'Maggie, I have invited some friends to supper; cook me two chickens.'

'That will I do, master,' she replied. So she went out and killed two fowls and prepared them for roasting.

In the afternoon she placed them on the spit before the fire, and they were all ready, and beautifully hot, and brown by the proper time, but the visitor had not arrived. So she went to her master, and said, 'The fowls will be spoilt if I keep them at the fire any longer. It will be a pity and a shame if they are not eaten soon.'

Then said her master, 'I will go and fetch the visitor myself, and away he went.'

As soon as his back was turned, Maggie put the spit with

the birds on one side, and thought, 'I have been standing by the fire so long that it has made me quite thirsty. Who knows when they will come? While I am waiting I may as well run into the cellar, and have a little drop.' So she seized a jug and said, 'All right, Maggie, thou shalt have a good draught. Wine is so tempting,' she said again, 'and it does not do to spoil your draught;' and then she drank without stopping till the jug was empty.

After this she went into the kitchen, and placed the fowls again before the fire, basted them with butter, and rattled the spit round so that they browned and frizzled with the heat. 'They would never miss a little piece,' she said to herself. Then she dipped her finger in the dripping-pan to taste, and cried, 'Oh, how nice these fowls are! It is a sin and a shame that there is no one here to eat them.'

She ran to the window to see if her master and the guests were coming; but she could see no one. So she went and stood again by the fowls, and thought, 'The wing of that fowl is a little burnt. I had better eat it.' She cut it off, as she thought this, and ate it up, and it tasted so nice that when she had finished it, she thought 'I must have the other wing. Master will never notice that anything is wanting.'

After the two wings were eaten, Maggie again went to look for her master, but there were no signs of his appearance. 'Who knows?' she said to herself; 'perhaps the visitor is not coming at all, and they have kept my master to dinner, so he won't be back.'

'Hi! Maggie, there are good things left for you, and the piece of fowl has made me thirsty. I must have another drink before I eat all the rest.' So she went into the cellar, and had a large draught of wine, and, returning to the kitchen, sat down and ate the remainder of the fowl with great relish.

There was now one fowl gone, and, as her master did not return, Maggie began to look at the other with longing eyes. At last she said, 'Where one is, there must be another.'

the fowls belong to each other, and what is right for one is also fair and right for the other. I believe, too, I want some more to drink. It won't hurt me.' The last draught gave her courage. She came back to the kitchen, and let the second fowl go after the first.

As she was enjoying the last morsel, home came her master. 'Make haste, Maggie,' he cried. 'The guest will be here in a few minutes.'

'Yes, master,' she replied. 'It will soon be all ready.'

Meanwhile, the master saw that the cloth was laid, and everything in order. So he took up the carving-knife, with which he intended to carve the fowl, and went out to sharpen it on the stones in the passage.

While he was doing so, the guest arrived, and knocked gently and courteously at the house-door. Maggie ran out to see who it was, and when she caught sight of the visitor, she placed her finger on her lips, and whispered, 'Hush, hush! go back again as quickly as you came. If my master should catch you, it would be unfortunate. He did invite you to dinner this evening; but with no other intention than to cut off both your ears. Listen, you can hear him sharpening his knife.'

The guest heard the sound, and hastened as fast as he could down the steps, and was soon out of sight.

Maggie was not idle. She ran screaming to her master, and cried, 'You have invited fine visitors!'

'Hi! Why, Maggie, what do you mean?'

'Oh!' she exclaimed, 'he has taken my two beautiful fowls, and run away with them.'

'What strange conduct!' said her master, who was sorry to lose his supper. 'If he had left me one, or at least enough for my own dinner!' He ran after the guest and called to him to stop. But the more he cried to him, the faster he ran; and when he saw him with the knife in his hand, and heard him say, 'Only one! Only one!' he meant, if they had

left him 'only one fowl'), he thought he spoke of 'only one ear' which he intended to cut off, and so he ran as if fire were burning around him, so that he might reach home with both ears untouched.

THE OLD GRANDFATHER AND HIS GRANDSON.

THERE was once a very old man whose eyes were dim, whose knees tottered under him when he walked, and who was very deaf. As he sat at table, his hand shook so that he would often spill the soup over the table-cloth, or on his clothes, and sometimes even he could not keep it in his mouth when it got there. His son and daughter-in-law were so annoyed at this that they placed a chair for him in a corner behind the screen and gave him his meals in an earthenware basin. He would often look sorrowfully at the table with tears in his eyes.

One day the earthenware basin, which he could scarcely hold in his trembling hands, fell to the ground and was broken. The young wife scolded him well for being so careless, but he did not reply, only sighed deeply. Then she bought him a wooden bowl for a few pence, and gave him his meals in it.

They were once sitting thus, when they saw their little boy of four years old sitting on the ground and fastening some pieces of wood together.

'What are you making, my boy?' asked his father.

'I am making a little bowl for papa and mamma to eat their food in when I grow up,' he replied.

The husband and wife looked at each other without speaking for some minutes. At last they began to shed tears, and went and brought their old father back to the table, and from that day he always took his meals with them, and was never again treated unkindly.

THE WATER SPRITE.

A LITTLE brother and sister were once playing together by the side of a well, and both fell in. Under the water they found a fairy, who said: 'Now I have caught you. Now you shall work for me.'

So she carried them both away. She set the maiden to spin hard, tangled flax, and gave her a cask full of holes to fill with water; and she sent the boy to cut wood with a blunt axe, and they got nothing to eat but hard dumplings.

The children became at last so impatient that they waited till one Sunday, when the fairy was at church, and ran away. But when church was over, the fairy saw that they were flown, and went after them with great strides. The children saw her coming in the distance, and the maiden threw behind her a great bush, which instantly became a mountain covered with prickly points, over which the fairy had the greatest trouble to climb. But the children saw that she had managed to get over, and was coming near.

The boy then threw a comb behind him, which became a mountain of combs, with hundreds of teeth sticking up; but the fairy knew how to hold fast on this, and soon clambered over it.

The maiden next threw a looking-glass behind, which became a mountain also, and was so slippery that it was impossible to get over it.

Then thought the fairy: 'I will go home and fetch my axe, and break the looking-glass.'

But when she came back and had broken the looking-glass, the children had been for a long time too far away for her to overtake them, so she was obliged to sink back into the well.

THE DEATH OF THE LITTLE HEN.

ONCE upon a time a little cock and a little hen went to a mountain to gather nuts, and they promised each other that whoever found the first nut, it should be divided between them.

Now, the little hen found a very large nut, but she said nothing about it, for she wanted to eat all by herself. But the kernel was so large that when she tried to swallow it, it stuck in her throat, and, fearing she should be choked, she screamed out loudly 'Little cock, water, quick ! or I shall be choked !'

Away ran the cock as fast as he could to the spring. 'Spring' he cried, 'pray give me some water ; my little hen has swallowed a kernel, and she is choking.'

'Go first to the bride,' answered the spring, 'and ask her for a piece of red silk.'

The poor cock ran to the bride, and said : 'Dear bride, pray give me a piece of red silk for the spring, that I may get some water for my little hen, who has swallowed a large nut kernel, and will be choked.'

The bride answered : 'Run first and fetch me my wreath which hangs on the willow yonder.'

Then ran the cock to the willow, and fetched the wreath. The bride gave him the red silk, which he took to the spring and got some water at last. But it was too late ; when he brought the water to the hen he found her lying dead on the ground, for the nut had choked her.

The cock was in such distress that he gave a loud scream ; then all the animals came and mourned for the hen, and six mice offered to build a little carriage for the funeral, and when it was finished they harnessed themselves to it, and started for the grave, while the cock followed. On the way they met a fox, who asked where they were going.

'I am going to bury my little hen,' replied the cock,

'May I go with you ?' asked the fox.

'Yes, if you follow behind; for my little horses could not draw the carriage with you on it.'

So the fox placed himself behind, and then came up a wolf, a bear, a stag, and a lion, and many other beasts of the forest, and joined the procession. They had not gone far when they came to a brook.

'How are we to get over here?' asked the cock.

There was a stalk of straw lying on the brook, and it said: 'I will place myself across from one side to the other, and you can easily get over me.'

But when the six mice stepped on the bridge, it broke under them, and they all fell in and were drowned. This was a new trouble; but presently a coal came by and said: 'I think I am big and strong enough to carry you over safely.'

So the coal placed himself in the water, but unfortunately just touched it, was extinguished, and drowned.

At last a large stone took compassion on them, and laid itself across the stream from one side to the other. Over this the cock drew the waggon with his dead hen upon it, and landed it quite safely on the opposite shore.

The rest of the procession wished to follow, so the empty carriage was sent back for them; but it was very small, and as they all crowded upon it at once, it upset, and they fell into the water and were drowned. The cock was therefore left alone with his dead hen, so he dug a grave and laid her in it, and raised a mound over her. On this he seated himself, and grieved so much and so long that at length he died of grief.

HANS IN LUCK.

Hans had served his master seven years, and at last said to him: 'Master, my time is up; I should like to go home and see my mother, so give me my wages.'

And the master said: 'You have been a faithful and good servant. As the service was, so shall the reward be;' and he gave him a piece of silver as big as his head.

Hans took out his pocket-handkerchief, wrapped the lump in it, threw it over his shoulder, and set out homewards. As he went on, putting one foot before the other, a man came in sight, trotting gaily on a capital horse. 'Ah,' said Hans aloud, 'what a fine thing it is to ride! There one sits as in a chair, one trips over no stones, one saves one's shoes, and yet gets on one hardly knows how.'

The horseman heard this, and said: 'Well, Hans, why do you go on foot, then?'

'Ah!' said he, 'I must; I have this load to carry home. To be sure, it is silver, but I can't hold my head straight for it, and it hurts my shoulder.'

'We will exchange,' said the horseman; 'I will give you my horse, and you shall give me your lump.'

'With all my heart,' said Hans; 'but I tell you you'll have to drag it along.'

The horseman got off, took the silver, helped Hans up, gave him the bridle into his hand, and said: 'If you want to go very fast, you must click your tongue, and cry "Jup, jup!"'

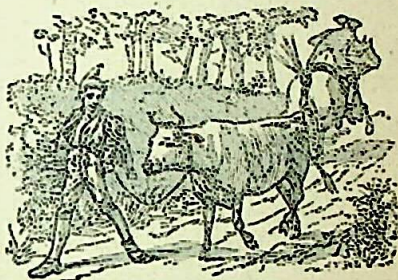
Hans was delighted as he sat on the horse and rode merrily on. After a time he thought it ought to go faster, so he began to click with his tongue, and cried 'Jup, jup!' Away went the horse full gallop, and before Hans knew what he was about, he was thrown off, and lay in a ditch by the roadside. His horse would have run away if a countryman who was coming along the road, driving a cow, had not stopped to help him. Hans soon got upon his legs again, but he was vexed, and said to the countryman: 'This riding is no joke when a man goes on a mare like this, that kicks and flings one off, so that there is a chance of breaking one's neck. Never again will I mount it. I like your cow, for one can walk behind her at one's leisure, and have milk, butter, and cheese every day.'

into the bargain. What would not I give to have such a cow!

'Well,' said the countryman, 'if you are so fond of her, I will change my cow for your horse.'

Hans agreed with delight, and the countryman jumped upon the horse and rode quickly away. Hans drove off his cow quietly, and thought his bargain a very lucky one.

'If I have only a piece of bread (and I certainly shall be able to get that), I can, whenever I like, eat butter and cheese with it; and when I am thirsty I can



THE COUNTRYMAN RODE QUICKLY AWAY.

milk my cow and drink the milk: what can I wish for more?

When he came to an inn, he halted, ate up all the food he had with him, and gave away his last penny for a glass of beer. Then he drove his cow towards his mother's village. The heat grew greater as noon came on, and he found himself on a wide heath that would take him more than an hour to cross. He began to be so hot and parched that his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. 'I can find a cure for this,' thought Hans; 'I will milk my cow now, and quench my thirst with the milk.' So he tied her to the stump of a tree, and, as he had no pail, he held his leather cap to milk into; but not a drop came. While he was trying his luck and managing the matter very clumsily, the uneasy beast gave him a kick on the head that knocked him down, and there he lay, and for a long time did not know where he was.

Luckily, a butcher came by, with a pig in a wheelbarrow. 'What is the matter with you?' said the butcher, as he helped him up.

Hans told him what had happened, and the butcher gave

him a flask, saying: 'Take a drink and refresh yourself; your cow will give you no milk; she is an old beast, good for nothing but the plough or the butcher.'

'Alas! alas!' said Hans. 'Who would have thought it! If I kill her what will she be good for? I hate cow-beef; it is not tender enough for me. If it were a pig, now, one could do something with it; it would, at any rate, make some sausages.'

'Well,' said the butcher, 'to please you, I'll change, and give you the pig for the cow.'

'Heaven reward you for your kindness!' said Hans, as he gave the butcher the cow and took the pig off the wheelbarrow, and drove it off, holding it by the string that was tied to its leg. So on he jogged, and all seemed now to go right with him; he had met with some misfortunes, to be sure, but he was now well repaid for all.

The next person he met was a countryman carrying a fine white goose under his arm. They said good-morning to each other, and Hans told him about all his luck, and how he had made so many good bargains.

The countryman said he was going to take the goose to a christening. 'Feel,' said he, 'how heavy it is; it has been fattened for the last eight weeks. Whoever roasts and eats it may cut plenty of fat off it.'

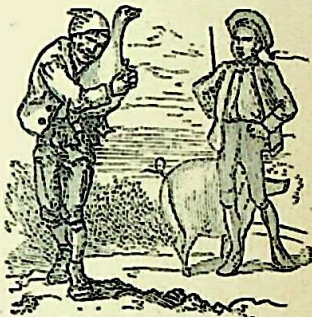
'You're right,' said Hans, as he weighed it in his hand; 'but my pig is not a bad one.'

Meantime, the countryman began to look grave and shook his head. 'Hark ye,' he said, 'my good friend; your pig may get you into a scrape. In the village I have just come from, the mayor himself has had one stolen out of his sty. I was dreadfully afraid, when I saw you, that you had got that pig. It will be a bad job if they catch you; the least they'll do will be to shut you up in the dark hole.'

Poor Hans was sadly frightened. 'Good man,' cried he, 'pray get me out of this scrape! You know this country better than I, take my pig and give me the goose.'

'I shall risk something by the bargain,' said the country-man; 'however, I will not bear hard upon you, as you are in trouble.'

Then he took the string in his hand, and drove off the pig by a side path, while Hans went on the way homewards with the goose under his arm. 'After all,' thought he, 'I have the best of the bargain: first, there will be a capital roast; then the fat will find me in goose-grease for four months; and then there are all the beautiful white feathers. I will stuff them into my pillow, and then I am sure I shall sleep soundly without rocking. How happy my mother will be!'



HANS WITH THE GOOSE UNDER HIS ARM.

As he came to the last village, he saw a scissors-grinder with his wheel working away, and singing:

'I sharpen scissors, I grind knives well;
My coat blows out as my things I sell.'

Hans stood looking at him, and at last said: 'You must be well off, Master Grinder, you seem so happy at your work.'

'Yes,' said the other, 'mine is a golden trade; a good grinder never puts his hand in his pocket without finding money in it. But where did you get that beautiful goose?'

'I did not buy it, but changed a pig for it.'

'And where did you get the pig?'

'I gave a cow for it.'

'And the cow?'

'I gave a horse for it.'

'And the horse?'

'I gave a piece of silver as big as my head for that.'

'And the silver?'

'Oh, I worked hard for that seven long years.'

'You have thriven well in the world hitherto,' said the grinder; 'now, if you could find money in your pocket whenever you put your hand into it, your fortune would be made.'

'Very true; but how is that to be managed?'

'You must become a grinder as I am,' said the other. 'You only want a grindstone; the rest will come of itself. Here is one that is a little the worse for the wear; I would not ask more than the value of your goose for it. Will you buy?'

'How can you ask such a question?' replied Hans. 'I should be the happiest man in the world could I have money whenever I put my hand in my pocket. What could I want more? There's the goose!'

'Now,' said the grinder, as he gave him a common rough stone that lay by his side, 'this is a capital stone; do but manage it cleverly, and you can sharpen an old nail on it.'

Hans took the stone and went off with a light heart; his eyes sparkled for joy, and he said to himself: 'I must have been born with a caul; everything that I want or wish comes to me as if I were a Sunday-child.'

Meantime he began to be tired, for he had been travelling ever since daybreak; he was hungry, for he had eaten all his food and given away his last penny in his joy at getting the cow. At last he could go no further, and the stone tired him terribly. He dragged himself to a well in a field that he might drink some water and rest awhile, and he laid the stone carefully by his side on the bank; but as he stooped down to drink he forgot it, pushed it a little, and down it went plump into the well.

When he saw it sinking in the deep water, he jumped for joy, and again fell upon his knees, and thanked Heaven with tears in his eyes for its kindness in taking away his only plague—the ugly, heavy stone. 'How happy am I!' cried he. 'No mortal was ever so lucky as I am.' Then up he got with a light heart, and, free from all his troubles, ran till he reached his mother's house.

HANS MARRIED.

THERE was once a young peasant called Hans whose cousin wished to marry him to a rich woman. He seated Hans behind the stove, and had it heated; then he fetched a pot of milk and plenty of white bread, and gave him a newly-coined bright farthing in his hand, and said: 'Hans, hold the farthing firmly, and the white bread, which you must crumble into the milk, and remain sitting there; do not move until I come back.'

'Yes,' said Hans, 'I will do so.'

Then the suitor put on an old pair of patched trousers, went into another village to a rich peasant's daughter, and said: 'Will you not marry my cousin Hans? You will get an honest and sensible man, who will please you.'

Then the miserly father asked: 'How is it with his means? Has he bread to break?'

'Dear friend,' said the suitor, 'my young cousin sits in a warm place, has a nice bit of money in his hand, and has plenty of bread to break. He can also count as many patches' (plots of land were thus called in that part of the country) 'as I,' slapping at the same time his patched trousers. 'If you will take the trouble to go with me, I will show you that it is as I have said.'

The miser did not wish to lose the opportunity, and said: 'If that is the case, I have nothing further to say against the marriage.'

Now, the marriage was celebrated on the appointed day, and when the young woman wished to go into the fields, and see the property of the bridegroom, Hans first took off his Sunday coat and put on his patched smock-frock, and said: 'I must not spoil my good coat.' Then they went together into the fields, and where the signpost pointed the way, or where fields

and meadows were divided, Hans pointed with his finger, and then struck on a large or small patch of his smock, and said: 'This patch is mine, and that also, my treasure; look at it,' wishing to say that his wife should not look at the fields, but on his coat, which was his own.

'Were you at the wedding?'

'Yes, I was there, and in full state. My head was adorned with snow, when the sun came and melted it; my dress was of cobwebs, and I came by some thorns which tore it; my slippers were of glass, I knocked against a stone, they said "klink," and were broken.'

THE FOX AND THE GEESE.

A FOX came once to a meadow, where a herd of fine fat geese were enjoying themselves. 'Ah,' he said, laughing, 'I am just in time. They are so close together that I can come and fetch them one after another easily.'

The geese, when they saw him, began to cackle with fear, sprung up, and, with much complaining and murmuring, begged for their lives.

The fox, however, would not listen, and said: 'There is no hope of mercy—you must die.'

At last one of them took heart, and said: 'It would be very hard for us poor geese to lose our young, fresh lives so suddenly as this; but if you will grant us only one favour, afterwards we will place ourselves in a row, so that you may choose the fattest and best.'

'And what is this favour?' asked the fox.

'Why, that we may pray before we die.'

'Well, that is only fair,' replied the fox; 'it is a harmless request. Pray away, then, and I will wait for you.'

Then the first began a long prayer, for ever saying, 'Ga, ga !' and because he would not stop, the second began, without waiting his turn, 'Ga, ga !' The third and fourth followed her, and soon they were all cackling together.

This story shall be continued when they have stopped, but they still continue praying.

THE GOOSE-GIRL.

THERE was once an old queen whose husband had been dead many years, and she had a beautiful daughter. This daughter had been for some time betrothed to the son of a king who lived many miles away. She was now grown up, and the queen knew that very soon her child must leave her, and travel into distant lands, to be the wife of the king's son, so she began to collect many costly things which were to be sent with her as marriage presents—dresses and trinkets, gold and silver, goblets and jewels ; indeed, everything suitable for the treasures of a royal bride, for she loved her child dearly.

She gave her also a waiting-maid to ride with her, and to place her hand in that of the bridegroom. The queen also provided each a horse for the journey, and the bride's horse, which was named Falada, could speak.

When the farewell hour arrived, the queen repaired to her sleeping-room, took a small knife, and cut her finger till it bled. Then she laid a piece of rag on the table, let fall three drops of blood on it, gave it to her daughter, and said : ' Dear child, take care not to lose this, and no harm will happen to you on the way.'

The queen took a sorrowful leave of her daughter, who had placed the piece of rag in her bosom before she seated herself on her horse, to ride away to her bridegroom.

After journeying about an hour, the heat made the princess very thirsty, and, stopping her horse, she said to her waiting-maid: 'Please alight, and draw me some water in one of my little cups which the queen, my mother, gave me; I must have something to drink, I am so thirsty.'

'If you are thirsty,' replied the waiting-maid, 'get down



THE QUEEN TOOK A SORROWFUL LEAVE OF HER DAUGHTER.

from your horse yourself, and lie down by the brook and drink. I am not going to be your servant!

The princess got off her horse, for her thirst was very great, and, lying down, she drank from the stream, for she durst not ask for the cup. But she could not help sighing, and then she

heard the rag in her bosom say : ' If the queen-mother knew this, she would break her heart.' But the young bride was humble ; she said nothing, and again mounted her horse and rode away for several miles. The heat still continued, and the princess again suffered from thirst, and presently they came to a running stream. She once more asked her maid to alight



LYING DOWN, SHE DRANK FROM THE STREAM.

and fetch her a little water in the cup. Again the other replied haughtily that she might get it herself ; she was not going to be her maid.

She was therefore obliged to get down and drink from the flowing stream as she had done before. This time she wept, and heard the voice in her bosom say, ' Ah, if your mother

knew this, she would break her heart.' But as she stooped over the edge of the stream to drink, the piece of cloth, on which were the blood-drops, fell from her bosom into the water, and floated away without her noticing it in her sorrow and trouble. Her companion, however, saw it, and rejoiced that now the bride had become weak and powerless.

As she turned round to mount her horse again, her companion said to her, 'Falada belongs to me, you must ride on my horse.' Then, with harsh and cruel words, the woman obliged her to take off her royal dress, and put on her own common one, and made her swear that when they reached the king's court she would not reveal that she was a princess. And if she had not taken this oath, she would have killed her on the spot. But Falada saw and heard all that passed, and took care to remember it.

The lady's-maid rode after this on Falada, and the true bride on the inferior horse, and so they travelled farther, till at last they arrived at the royal castle. Their arrival was announced with great joy. The king's son hastened forward to receive them, and assisted the lady's-maid to alight from her horse, thinking that she was his bride. He led her up the steps into the castle, while the real bride remained behind.

Presently the old king looked out of a window, and saw her standing in the court, and he could not help noticing that she looked refined and delicate, and was very beautiful. He went out, and with kingly gentleness asked her why she was staying there, and what she wanted, and who she was.

She replied: 'I came all this way as a companion, and I have no other employment.'

'I am sorry there is no situation for you,' replied the king; 'but I know a little maiden who has a number of geese; she is called Kürdchen; you may help her.'

So the real bride went to take care of the geese.

Soon after this the false bride said to the king's son: 'Dearest prince, will you do me a favour?'

‘Certainly, I will do it,’ he replied.

‘Well, then, I want you to have the horse that I rode on, in my journey here, destroyed, for it provoked me.’

She knew that the horse could speak, and feared he would some day tell the prince she was not the real bride.

The order to kill Falada came to the ears of the true bride, and she found out the man, and promised him a piece of gold if he would do her a service.

In the town was a large, gloomy-looking door, through which the geese had to be driven morning and evening, and she told the man who was going to kill Falada to fasten the head on this gloomy door that she might see it every day as she passed through.

The man promised to comply, so poor Falada’s head was cut off and nailed to the door.

Early the next morning, when she and Kürdchen passed through she spoke to the head, and said, ‘Falada, dost thou know me?’

‘Ah, yes,’ replied the head; ‘you are the young princess, and if your mother knew, she would break her heart.’

Then she joined Kürdchen, and they drove the geese into the field. As soon as they could sit down, the young princess unfastened her hair that she might comb it and make it neat.

Kürdchen was quite delighted when she saw the hair, for it was bright and golden, and the princess had always hitherto worn it hidden under a cap, so she came over to cut off a lock for herself. But the princess did not wish to lose her hair, so she cried out:

‘Blow, blow, wind; take Kürdchen’s hat in the air,
And do not let her catch it till I have done my hair.’

Then there came such a strong wind that Kürdchen’s little hat was carried away, so she had to run a long distance, and before she could get back from fetching it, her companion had finished combing her hair, and she could not cut any off.

Kürdchen was so cross that she would not speak to her all day till they went home.

Next day the princess, when they drove the geese out from the gloomy door, spoke to the horse's head; and Falada again replied that she was the queen's daughter, and that her



'BLOW, BLOW, WIND; TAKE KÜRDCHEN'S HAT IN THE AIR'

mother, if she knew, would break her heart. Also when they reached the field, and Kürdchen wanted a lock of her hair while the princess was combing it, she again said:

'Blow, blow, wind; take Kürdchen's hat in the air,
And do not let her catch it till I have done my hair.'

This happened several times, and at last Kürdchen went to the old king, and said: 'I cannot have this maiden to help me to watch the geese any longer.'

'Why, what has she done?' asked the king.

'Oh! she worries me the whole day, and every morning when we drive the herd out through the dark gate, she stops to talk to a horse's head which is nailed there, and says: "Falada, dost thou know me?" and the head answers, "You are a king's daughter, and if your mother knew, she would break her heart."'

And then Kürdchen told the king what happened in the field, and how the wind blew her hat away.

The king commanded Kürdchen to go again the next day, and as soon as morning came he placed himself near the dark gate, and heard the stranger speak to the head of Falada. After this, he hastened to the field, hid himself in the bushes, and as the maiden unfastened her hair, he saw with his own eyes that it was very beautiful, and glittered like gold. He heard the maiden call upon the wind to blow away Kürdchen's hat, and saw what trouble she had to catch it.

The king went back to the castle unnoticed, but in the evening he sent for the strange maiden, and asked her the meaning of all he had seen.

'I dare not tell,' she replied, 'neither can I venture even to complain of my trouble to anyone: for I have sworn in the sight of heaven that I will divulge nothing, or else my life would have been forfeited!'

The king pressed her very much to tell him, but he could get nothing out of her. Then he said: 'Go and complain of your trouble to that iron closet;' and he went away.

Then she crept into the iron closet, and began to lament and weep, and said aloud: 'I am now forsaken by the whole world, and yet I am a king's daughter. A false lady's-maid got me into her power, made me take off my royal dress and give it to her, and has taken my place with my bridegroom, while I must

serve as a tender of herds of geese. Oh, if my mother knew she would break her heart !'

The king, who had been standing near the closed door listening, heard all she said ; so he opened the door, and called her to come out. Her royal clothes were put on, and he was astonished to find her so beautiful.

The old king now sent for his son, and disclosed to him that he had a false bride, who was merely the lady's-maid, and that the maiden who had been obliged to keep the geese was the real bride.

The prince was rejoiced at seeing how beautiful the true bride was, and his friends and acquaintances were invited to a feast.

When the day arrived, the bridegroom placed the king's daughter on one side of himself, and the lady's-maid on the other ; but the lady's-maid did not recognise the princess in her rich and glittering dress.

When the feast ended, and they were all in good spirits and merry, the old king asked the lady's-maid : ' What does she deserve who betrays her master ? ' And then he related the circumstances he had learnt from the princess. ' Pronounce her sentence,' cried the king, as he finished.

' She deserves nothing better,' said the false bride, ' than to be torn to pieces by wild horses, and rolled down a hill in a cask full of spikes till she is dead !'

' You have pronounced your own doom,' said the king ; ' you are the guilty person.'

So the false bride was led away to punishment, and very soon after the young king married the right bride, and they both ruled the kingdom in peace and happiness.

THE ELVES.

There was once a rich king who had three daughters that went every day to walk in the palace garden. The king was very fond of all kinds of fine trees, and of one of these he was so fond that if anyone plucked an apple from it he wished him a hundred fathoms underground. Now, when it was harvest the apples of this tree were all as red as blood. The three daughters went every day under the tree to see if the wind had blown any apples down, but they found none, though the tree was so full of them that it was almost breaking, and the branches hung down to the ground. Then the youngest of the princesses desired one very much, and said to her sisters, 'Our father, who loves us so much, would not wish us underground; I think he would only do that to strangers.'

And the child plucked a very large apple, and ran to her sisters, and said, 'Just taste, my dear sisters; I have never in my life tasted so fine a one.' The two other sisters tasted the apple, and then all three sank into the ground, where no cock crows.

Now, when it was mid-day the king wished to call them to dinner, but they were not to be found. He sought them everywhere in the castle and in the garden, but he could not find them. He was much troubled, and made known to the whole country that whoever brought his daughters back should have one of them for his wife. Many young people went to seek for them about the country—more than can be counted, for everyone loved the three children, because they were friendly to all and very beautiful. Three young huntsmen also went, and when they had travelled for eight days they came to a large castle in which were beautiful rooms. In one room was a table covered with delicate food, so warm that the dishes still smoked; in the whole castle no man was to be seen or heard

They waited half a day, and the food still remained warm; at last they were so hungry that they sat down and ate, and agreed that they would stay and live at the castle; that they should draw lots for one to remain in it, and the other two go and seek for the king's daughter. This they did, and the lot fell on the eldest; the next day the two youngest sons went out, while the eldest stayed in the castle. At mid-day a little mannikin came and asked for a bit of bread. The hunter took the bread which he had found and cut off a round, and was about to give it to him, when, as he was handing it to him, the mannikin let it fall and asked him to be good enough to give him the piece again. As he was going to do so and stooped, the mannikin took a stick, seized him by the hair, and gave him a dozen blows. The next day, when the second brother stayed at home, he fared no better. When the two others came home in the evening, the eldest asked, 'Well, how are you got on?'

'Oh, very badly!'

Then they complained together, but said nothing to the youngest, for they did not care for him, and called him stupid Hans, because he did not really belong to the forest. On the third day the youngest stayed behind; then came the little mannikin again and asked for a piece of bread, and as it was being handed to him he let it fall, and begged Hans to be good enough to hand him the piece again. But he said to the little mannikin, 'What! can you not pick it up yourself? If you will not take so much trouble for your daily bread, you are not worthy of what you eat.' Then the mannikin became very angry, and said that he must do it; but Hans would not, and took the dear little mannikin up and beat him thoroughly.

The mannikin screamed very much, and said, 'Stop! stop! and let me go, and then I will tell you where the king's daughters are.'

When Hans heard that he left off beating him, and the mannikin told him that he was an earth mannikin, and that there were

more than a thousand of them ; that if he would go with him he would show him where the king's daughters were. Then he showed him a deep well, but there was no water in it. The mannikin told him that he knew his companions did not intend to deal honourably with him, therefore if he wished to release the princesses he must do it alone. The two other brothers would willingly recover the king's daughters, but they would not take any trouble or endure danger. Hans was to take a great basket, and seat himself in it with his knife and a bell, and be let down. There were below three rooms, in each of which sat a princess, who had a dragon with many heads to look after. He must cut off the heads of these dragons. When the elf had said this he disappeared. When it was evening the two others returned, and asked him how he had got on, and he said, 'Very well, so far. He had seen no one until mid-day, when a mannikin came and asked for a bit of bread; as he gave it him the mannikin had let it fall, and said he must pick it up; but, as he would not do it, the mannikin had been angry and had done what he ought not, so he beat him; and then the mannikin said where the king's daughters were.' Then they were so much annoyed that they turned yellow and green.

The next morning they went together to the well, and cast lots for who was to sit in the basket first, and the lot fell on the eldest; he was to sit in, and take the bell. 'If I ring,' he said, 'you must pull me up quickly.' When he had gone down a little he rang, and was brought up; then the second sat in, and did just the same. Now it came to the turn of the youngest, who let himself be lowered quite down. When he got out of the basket he took his hunting-knife and went and stood outside the first door, where he heard the dragon snoring loudly. He opened the door slowly, and there sat one of the princesses, who had on her knee nine dragon heads, and was combing them. He took his knife and cut at them, and the nine heads fell off. The princess started up and fell on his

neck, praised and kissed him repeatedly, and took her stomacher, which was of red gold, and hung it round his neck. Then he went to the second princess, who had a dragon with seven heads to comb, and delivered her; and next to the youngest, who had a dragon with four heads. They all rejoiced greatly, and embraced and kissed him without stopping, and he rang so loudly that those above heard it. He put the princesses one after the other into the basket, and had them all drawn up; but when it came to his own turn he remembered the words of the elf, 'that his companions did not mean well to him,' so he put a great stone into the basket, and when it was about half-way up his false brothers cut the ropes, so that the basket, with the stone, fell to the ground. They, thinking he was dead, ran away with the three princesses, and made them promise that they would tell their father that it was they who had delivered them; then they went to the king, and each demanded a princess in marriage.

In the meantime the youngest huntsman went quite singly through the three rooms, thinking that he must die here, when he saw a flute hanging on the wall. Then he said, 'Why do you hang there? One cannot be merry here.' He looked at the dragon's head, and said, 'You cannot help me now.' And he walked up and down so often that the ground became quite smooth. But at last other thoughts occurred to him; he took down the flute and played a few notes, and at once very many elves came; at every note he sounded one more appeared. Then he played until the room was quite full. They all asked him what he wanted; he said he wished to be above ground in the light of day. Then they seized him by every hair that he had on his head and flew up to the earth. When he was up he went at once to the king's palace, just as the wedding of one of the princesses was to take place, and to the room where the king was with his three daughters. As soon as the princesses saw him they fainted. The king was angry, and ordered

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him to prison, as he thought he must have done his children some harm. But when the princesses were come to themselves, they begged much that the king would set him free. The king asked why, and they answered that they must not tell; so the father said that they should tell it to the stove. Then he went and listened at the door and heard all. He caused the two eldest brothers to be hung, and to the youngest he gave his youngest daughter; and then he put on a pair of glass slippers, and knocked them on a stone, and they said, 'Klink,' and were broken.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN.

A MERCHANT had two children, a boy and a girl, who were both so very young that they could not run alone. About this time the merchant sent two richly-laden ships to sea, which contained the whole of his possessions, and while he was expecting to receive a large amount of profits, news came that his ships had both been wrecked. Thus, instead of being a rich man, he was a poor one, for he had nothing left but one field.

One day, when he wished to divert his thoughts from his misfortunes, he went out to walk in his field. As he wandered along, he saw a dark little man standing near him, who asked him what made him so sad. 'If you could help me,' replied the merchant, 'I might be inclined to tell you.'

'Who knows, perhaps I may,' replied the little man.

Then the merchant described the great loss he had sustained in the wreck of his two ships, adding, 'All my possessions are lying at the bottom of the sea.'

'Do not make yourself unhappy,' replied the dark man. 'If you will promise that whatever comes first to meet you on

your return home, and rubs itself against your knees, shall be brought to this spot in twelve years, I will give you as much gold as you like.'

'Well,' thought he, 'my dog is the only one who can do that;' but he thought not of his children.

So he promised and gave the little strange man a written agreement, sealed with his own seal, and returned home. As he came into the house, his little son was so delighted that he let go the chair by which he was holding, and toddling towards him caught him by the knees. In a moment the father with terror remembered his promise, and knew now what his written agreement would cost him.

But on finding that his chests and coffers were still empty, he thought after all it might only be a joke on the part of the little man. A month, however, passed, and one day, when he again went out to try and dissipate the old sad thoughts about money, he saw lying on the barn-floor a large heap of gold. Now he was again all right, and able to trade so well with the money that he became after a time a richer merchant than before.

In the meantime the boy grew tall as well as clever and good; but when the end of the twelve years approached, the merchant became so full of care that it showed itself on his countenance.

One day his little son asked him what was the cause of his being so sad. At first his father would not tell him, but day after day he so persisted in his questions, that at length he told him what he had done.

'I wrote down my promise and sealed it,' he said, 'and therefore, when the twelve years are at an end I shall lose you.'

'Oh, father,' said the boy, 'do not allow yourself to be uneasy; it will be all right. The black man will have no power over me.'

The boy, however, went to a clergyman, and asked him for

his blessing, and when the hour came the father and son went to the field, and stood at the spot where the promise had been made. Then the boy made a cross on the ground, placed his father and himself on it, and waited.

Presently the little black man appeared, and said to the father: 'Have you brought me what you promised?' but he did not reply.

Then said the son: 'What do you want here?'

The dark man replied: 'I am here to speak to your father, not to you.'

'You have betrayed and misled my father!' answered the boy fearlessly; 'give up the bond!'

'No,' he replied, 'I will not give up my right!'

They talked together for a long time, and at last it was arranged that the son, as he did not belong to the enemy, and yet did not any longer belong to his father, should place himself in a little ship, and that his father should with his own foot push it away, that the boy might be given up to the water.

Then he took leave of his father, and stepped into the ship; his father pushed it off with his foot, when it turned over, so that the keel was uppermost, and the father, believing that his son was lost, went home and mourned for him deeply.

The little ship, however, did not sink, but righted itself again, and the boy clung to it closely.

At length it reached an unknown shore, and immediately became fast. The youth stepped out on the land, and seeing before him a beautiful castle, he walked up to it. But the moment he entered he was under a sorcerer's power. He went, however, from room to room, and found them all empty, except the last, in which lay a snake coiled round in rings on the floor.

The snake, however, was a bewitched maiden, who was delighted when she saw him, and said: 'Are you come, my

deliverer? I have waited for you for twelve years, and you must deliver this kingdom, which is bewitched!

'How can I do so?' he asked.

She replied, 'To-night there will come here twelve dark men bearing chains and fetters, who will ask you what you are doing here. Then must you be silent, and not answer a word in reply, let them do what they will to you. They will bear



'ARE YOU COME, MY DELIVERER?'

and torment you dreadfully; but whatever happens, do not speak, and at twelve o'clock they will be obliged to go away. To-morrow night another twelve men will come, and on the third night twenty-four. These last will cut off your head; but at twelve o'clock, if you have not spoken a word during the three nights, their power is over, and I am free. Then I shall be able to restore you to life, for I have a bottle of water

which can cure everything, and if I touch you with this you will soon be well.'

Then said he : 'I am quite willing to release you.'

It all happened exactly as she had said. The dark men came, but they could not make him speak a word, and so on the third night the snake was changed to a beautiful princess. The moment she was free, she opened the bottle of wonderful water, and, after anointing the youth with it, he was restored to life. There was then great joy over the whole castle.

They were soon after married, and the husband of the princess became king of the golden mountain.

Eight years passed in great happiness, and the young queen had one little son ; when her husband began to think of his father, and wished to go home and see him.

The queen, however, would not let him leave her, and said : 'I am sure that some misfortune will happen to me if you do ;' but he allowed her no rest, till she at last consented.

When they parted she gave him a wishing-ring, and said : 'Take that ring, and put it on your finger, and whenever you desire to change your place, you have only to touch it and wish, and you are there ; but promise me that you will not use it to desire me away from here to your father's house.'

He promised what she asked, placed the ring on his finger and wished himself at the town where his father lived. Immediately he found himself there ; but when he reached the gates, the sentinels would not let him pass, for he still wore his splendid and kingly robes.

Then he went to a hill close by, where a shepherd was keeping his sheep, changed clothes with him, and, putting on the shepherd's coat, walked into the town unnoticed.

When he appeared before his father, he did not recognise him at all ; he could not believe he could be his son, and said he had had a son, but he was dead. Still, seeing that the poor shepherd looked tired and hungry, he brought him something to eat.

Then the shepherd said to his parents: 'I am in very truth your son. Is there not any mark on my body by which you might know me?'

'Yes,' cried his mother, 'our son had a curious raspberry mark under his right arm.'

Instantly he turned up the sleeve of his shirt, and there was the mark of the raspberry. So they could no longer doubt that he was their son.

Thereupon he told them that he was now king of the golden mountain, and that a princess was his wife, and that he had a little son nearly seven years old. But his father remarked, 'Grand kings do not wear ragged clothes and a shepherd's coat.'

Upon this the son became very angry, and, quite forgetting his promise to his wife, turned the ring on his finger, and wished both the queen and her son to be present.

In a moment they were there; but the queen wept, and complained, and said, as he had broken his word, that misfortune would be the consequence.

'I did it inadvertently,' he said, 'and not with any wrong intention,' and tried so much to persuade her to forgive him, that at last she made it appear that she did so, but she was still angry in her heart.

He led her out through the town to the field, and showed her where the little ship had been upset; and presently he said, 'I am tired now; sit down for a little while, and let me lay my head in your lap and sleep.' She seated herself, and lying down, he placed his head in her lap, and was soon asleep.

While he slept, she first slipped the ring off his finger and placed it on her own, then she quietly drew away her foot that was under him and left only her slipper, took her child by the arm, and wished herself and her boy back in her kingdom.

When he awoke, he found himself quite forsaken, his wife and child gone, the ring taken from his finger, and only the slipper left as a token. 'I cannot go home to my parents

after this,' he said to himself; 'they will say truly that I am a sorcerer. No; I must try and get back to my kingdom.'

He travelled on after this for a long time, till he came to a mountain, before which stood three giants, contending about the division of their father's property.

As soon as he appeared, they called to him, and said that little men were often very clever, and that they would leave it to him to divide their inheritance fairly.

It consisted of a sword, which when one took it in his hand, and said, 'All heads down but mine,' all the heads would lie on the ground. Secondly of a cloak, which made everyone who wore it invisible; and thirdly of a pair of boots—those who wore them had only to wish themselves in any particular spot, and they would be there immediately.

Then the king said, 'Give me the three things that I may see if they are in good condition!'

They gave him the cloak, and the instant he put it on he was invisible, and changed into a fly. He quickly resumed his own shape, and said, 'The cloak is good; now give me the sword.'

'No,' they replied, 'we cannot give you that; for if you said, "Heads down, all but mine," you would have power over us, for your head would be the only one erect.' They gave it to him at last on condition that he would try it on a tree.

He did so, and the sword cut the trunk of the tree in two, as if it had been a stalk of straw. Then he wanted the boots, but they again refused, 'Because,' they said, 'if you put them on, and should wish yourself over this mountain, we should be down here, and have nothing.'

But he told them he would not, so they let him try the boots; but the moment he had them on he forgot everything but his wife and child, and said to himself, 'Oh, if I were only on the golden mountain!' In a moment he had vanished from the eyes of the giants, and with him all their shares of the inheritance.

As soon as he arrived at the castle, he heard sounds of merry-making, the flute and violin playing joyous music, and he was told that his wife was celebrating her marriage with another. 'The false one!' he exclaimed angrily; 'she has betrayed and forsaken me while I slept.' He threw on his cloak, and went into the castle invisible.

When he entered the dancing-saloon, he saw a table richly spread for the feast, and the guests eating, drinking, laughing and joking. His wife sat among them, splendidly dressed, on a royal seat, and with a crown of gold on her head.

He placed himself behind her, but no one saw him, and presently, when a piece of cake or a glass of wine was placed before her, he took the cake from her plate and drank the wine from her glass. The company were always giving her some of the rich things on the table; but it was useless: her plate and her glass always vanished immediately.

At last she became alarmed, rose up and went to her own chamber, and thither her husband followed. She wept and said, 'What can it be? am I not yet delivered from the wizard's spell?'

He struck her in the face, invisible as he was, and said, in a deep tone of voice, 'Thou wilt never be free, thou betrayer! the spell is over thee still.' Then he assumed his own shape, went into the saloon, and cried, 'The marriage is at an end; the real king has returned.' The kings, princes, and courtiers there assembled laughed and defied him; but he answered them shortly, in a few words, 'Will you leave this house or not?'

Instead of going, they crowded round him, and tried to seize him; but he drew his sword, and said, 'All heads down before mine.' In a moment all the heads were rolling on the ground, and he was alone, master of the castle and king of the golden mountain.

THE RAVEN.

THERE lived once a queen who had a little daughter still so young that she had to be carried in arms. One day the child was naughty, and do what the mother might she could not make her quiet.

At last she became impatient, and just as a raven flew over the castle she opened the window and cried, 'I wish you were a raven, and would fly away; then I should have peace.'

No sooner had she uttered the words than her child became a raven, and flew away from its mother's arms through the window to a dark wood, and remained there a long time, during which the parents heard nothing of her.

But one day a man travelling through the wood heard a voice calling him, and on going to the place from whence it came he saw a raven on a tree. 'I am a king's daughter by birth,' said the raven, as he came near, 'and have been changed by magic; but it is in your power to set me free.'

'What am I to do?' he asked.

'Go farther into the forest,' she replied, 'and there you will see a tiny house, in which lives an old woman, who will offer you something to eat and drink, but you must not take anything; if you do you will fall into a deep sleep, and be unable to set me at liberty. In the garden behind the house is a large tanyard, and there you must stand and wait for me. I shall come to you at two o'clock each day for three days, and each time in a carriage—on the first day drawn by four white horses, on the second by four brown horses, and the third time four black horses. If, however, you should not be awake, but sleeping, then I shall not be free.' The man promised to do all she said, but the raven said, 'Ah, I know already that you will not deliver me; you are sure to take something from the old woman.'

offers you.' The man promised again that he would not touch anything, either to eat or to drink.

As he approached the house the woman came out to him and said, 'Poor man, you seem tired out; but come in and refresh yourself, and have something to eat and drink.'

'No,' he replied; 'I do not want anything.'

But she gave him no peace till he came in, and then she said, 'If you won't eat, perhaps you will just drink a little from this glass; once is nothing at all.'



THE RAVEN'S CARRIAGE AND WHITE HORSES.

At last he allowed himself to be persuaded, and drank from the glass. Next day at noon he went out to wait for the raven till two o'clock at the tanyard. But while he stood there a feeling of fatigue came upon him that he could not overcome. 'I must lie down,' he said, 'but I will not sleep.'

No sooner, however, had he stretched himself on the ground than his eyes closed involuntarily, and presently he slept so soundly that nothing on earth could awake him.

At two o'clock came the raven in her carriage, drawn by

four white horses ; but she was already full of grief, and said, ' Ah, I know he will be asleep.'

When she entered the garden, there he lay in a deep sleep by the tanyard. She descended from the carriage, went to him, shook him, and tried all she could to wake him, but it was quite useless.

The next day, at noon, the old woman came again, and brought him meat and drink. He refused to take any, but she would not leave him alone ; she did and said all she could to persuade him, and at last he drank a second time from her glass. At the hour of two he went out again to stand by the tanyard, for he wanted to keep awake for the raven. But he found himself again so overcome with fatigue that his limbs would not support him ; he could not help himself, but was obliged to lie down, and soon fell fast asleep.

In the meantime the raven drove up in a carriage, drawn by four brown horses, but she was still sorrowful. ' I know he sleeps,' she said ; and so she found him lying in a deep sleep, from which nothing could awake him.

The next day the old woman said to him, ' If you do not eat or drink you will die.'

He replied, ' I will not, and I dare not eat or drink.'

However, she brought a dish with something very nice on it, and a glass of wine, and when the smell reached him he could withstand it no longer, and ate a good meal. When the time came for him to go out to the tanyard and wait, he was as tired as on the previous day, and, laying himself down, slept as soundly as if he had been a stone. At two o'clock came the raven again, this time with four black horses, and the carriage and all the harness were black also. She was, however, already sorrowful, and said, ' I know that he sleeps, and cannot set me free.' And she found her fears verified there he lay, fast asleep. She shook him, and called to him, but he did not awake.

Then she placed a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and

bottle of wine by his side, from which he could take what he liked. She also took a gold ring from her finger, on which her name was engraven, and placed it on his. And, last of all, she laid a letter on the ground, in which she told him what she had given him, and that it would never be finished; she added, 'I see that you cannot release me here, but come to the golden castle of Stromberg, for I know that my freedom can only be obtained through you.' After this she seated herself in her carriage and drove away to the golden castle of Stromberg.

When the man awoke, and found that he had been sleeping, he was deeply grieved, and said, 'Certainly now she has passed, and I have not set her free.' Then his eyes fell on the things that lay near him, and he took up and read the letter, which stated what she expected him to do.

He rose and went away, wishing to go to the golden castle, but the way was unknown to him. The first thing, however, was to get out of the wood; but this was not easy, for after wandering for fourteen days he could find no outlet. One evening he felt so tired that he laid himself down in the open and slept. Another day he went on farther, and again lay down to rest, but he heard such crying and howling this time that he could not sleep.

After awhile he saw the reflection of light, and, going towards it, he came in front of a house that appeared small because before it stood a great giant. Then thought he to himself, 'If I go in and the giant gets a glimpse of me, my life may not be safe.' However, he did venture to show himself.

As soon as the giant saw him he said, 'It is well that you have come. I have eaten nothing for some time, and I will at once swallow you for my supper!' 'Leave my life alone,' said the man. 'I should not willingly now myself to be swallowed, but if you are hungry I have enough with me to satisfy your appetite.'

'If that is true,' replied the giant, 'I will leave you in peace; I don't want to eat you if there is enough without it.'

So they went in and seated themselves at a table, and the man brought out bread and meat and wine.

'This pleases me well,' said the giant, and ate away to his heart's content.

After he had finished the man said to him, 'Where is the golden castle of Stromberg?'

The giant replied, 'I will fetch my map, in which all the towns, villages, and houses are easily found.' He brought the map from another room, and searched for the castle, but it was not there. 'This won't do,' said he. 'However, there is a larger map in that cupboard.' He brought out this map also, but it was as useless as the other—the castle was not mentioned.

After this the man wished to go, but the giant begged him to stay for a day or two longer, till his brother came home, who, he said, was gone out to fetch provisions. As soon as the brother returned, the man asked after the golden castle of Stromberg.

'After I have eaten my supper,' he replied, 'then I will look in the map.'

As soon as he had finished they went with him into his room, and searched on his map, but it could not be found even there. He then brought out another very old map, and would not give up the search, till at last they found the golden castle of Stromberg, but it was many thousand miles away.

'How shall I ever get there?' asked the man.

'Well,' said the giant, 'I have two hours to spare, and will carry you, if you like, to the neighbourhood of the castle; but after that I must return and look after my child.'

The man was glad of the help, and the giant took him up, and carried him in the two hours to a spot that was not a hundred leagues from the castle, and said, 'The rest of the way you can easily find for yourself.'

He turned away without waiting for thanks, and the man went forward day and night, till at last he came to the golden castle of Stromberg. It stood on a mountain of glass, and as he was looking at it he saw the enchanted king's daughter riding in her carriage to the castle, which she entered. He was delighted when he saw her, and began eagerly to climb the mountain; but he only went a few steps and then slid backwards, for the glass was so slippery.

When he found that it was impossible for him to reach the castle, he felt quite unhappy, and at last said to himself, 'I will remain down here and wait for her.' He built himself a little hut, in which he lived for a whole year, and every day saw the enchanted princess drive round the mountain, but could not get near her.

One day he saw outside his hut three robbers who were fighting with each other, and he cried out, 'Heaven defend us!' They stopped for a moment at the cry, but, seeing no one, they returned to the fight in the most terrible manner. Then cried he a second time, 'Heaven defend us!' They heard the sound again; but after looking about in every direction and seeing no one, continued their furious battle. Then he called a third time, and thought, 'I must see what these three men are about.' So he went and asked them why they were fighting with each other.

Said one: 'I have found a stick, which when you knock with it at any door it will instantly fly open.' Another said he had in his possession a cloak which would make anyone who wore it invisible. A third had a horse on which a man could ride over every sort of ground, even over the glass mountain. And now, as they could not agree, they scarcely knew what to do—whether to continue in partnership or to separate.

Then said the man: 'I will make an exchange with you for these three things. I have not money to buy them, but what I have is still more valuable. However, before I make

the exchange, I should like to try whether what you have said of them is true.'

They allowed him, as he wished, to mount the horse, gave him the stick in his hand, and threw the cloak over him.

Immediately he became invisible, and, giving each of them a sharp cut with the stick, said, 'You dolts! you have just got what you deserve, and I hope you are contented.' Then he rode quickly up the glass mountain and arrived at the castle. The door was locked, but he struck it with the stick and it flew open instantly.

He entered, and went up the steps into the saloon, and there sat the princess with a golden cup of wine before her. She could not see him, for he still wore the invisible cloak. But he went near to her, and taking the ring which she had given him from his finger, threw it into the cup, where it clinked against the side.

'That is my ring!' she cried; 'and the man to whom I gave it must be here, and will be able to break the enchanter's spell.'

She rose as she spoke, and went all over the castle, but could find no one. Meanwhile he had gone out and seated himself on the horse, and as she approached the open door he threw off the cloak; then she saw him, and screamed out for joy. He alighted from his horse, took the king's daughter in his arms, and she kissed him, and said, 'Now you have broken the spell, and I am free, and to-morrow morning we will celebrate our marriage.'

THE PEASANT'S CLEVER DAUGHTER.

THERE was once a poor peasant who had a small house, but no land. He had an only daughter, and she said one day: 'We should ask the king for a little piece of waste land.'

When the king heard how poor they were, he presented the peasant with a piece of ground. The father and daughter dug it up carefully, for they wished to sow a little corn and make the place fruitful. But while they were digging the earth they found a mortar of pure gold. On seeing it the father took it up eagerly, and said to his daughter, 'As the king has been so kind as to give us the field, we ought to send him the mortar.'

But the maiden was not willing to do so. 'Father,' she said, 'if we have the mortar without having the pestle as well, we shall have to find the pestle; therefore we had better keep silent.'

He would not listen, however, to her advice, but took up the mortar, carried it to the king, told him where he had found it, and asked if he would accept it as a token of his respect and gratitude. The king took the mortar, and asked if he had found more. The peasant replied truthfully, 'No.' But the king was not believed. 'I must have the pestle also,' said the king.

In vain the peasant assured the king that he had not found it; it was as if he spoke to the winds, and at last the poor honest fellow was placed in confinement, and told that he must remain there till he gave up the pestle. The servants were told to take him bread and water every day, which were the provisions allowed to prisoners; but he would neither eat nor drink, and was constantly crying out, 'Oh that I had listened to my daughter! oh that I had listened to my daughter!'

Then the servants went to the king and told him what the prisoner was always crying out, and that he would neither eat nor drink. So the king sent for him, and asked him what his daughter had said which he wished he had listened to.

'She prophesied,' he replied, 'that if I took the mortar from the king we should have to get the pestle.'

'Have you such a clever daughter?' said the king. 'Then send for her at once, that I may see her.'

So the peasant's daughter was obliged to come, and the king said: 'People tell me that you are very clever; I will give you a riddle to guess, and if you solve it you shall be my wife.'

Then she said at once that she would try. So the king said, 'Come to me neither clothed nor naked, neither riding nor walking, neither on the road nor on the path; and if you can do all this I will marry you.'

The maiden immediately went home, quickly stripped herself, got a large hank of yarn, placed herself in it, and wound it round and round her body till she was quite covered. Then a neighbour, for a small payment, lent her an ass, and she tied the end of the yarn to the ass's tail, so that he dragged her along behind him; therefore she neither rode nor drove. The ass also walked so that she was dragged along in a carriage-wheel rut, and only her great toe touched the ground, and thus she appeared before the king—neither clothed nor naked, neither riding, walking, nor driving, and neither on the road nor on the path.

When the king saw her he said she had guessed the riddle, and fulfilled the contract, and therefore he was ready to make her his wife. Her father was immediately released from confinement, and the king married his daughter, and bestowed upon them all the necessary kingly honours.

Some years passed, and one day the king went out on the parade. It happened just then that a number of peasants, who sold wood, stood with their waggon before the castle. To some of the waggon oxen were harnessed, and to others horses; among them was a peasant who had two horses and a young foal, and while they stood there the foal ran away and laid itself down between two oxen who were yoked in the waggon of another peasant. On this a quarrel arose among the peasants. The owner of the oxen said the foal belonged to one of his beasts, and the peasant declared it was the foal of one of his horses, and that it was his. The noise and the fighting became at last so great that the matter was brought

before the king, and he gave as his decision that where the foal was found lying there it should remain; and as that was with the oxen, therefore to the owner of the oxen the foal belonged, and might be taken by him. The other went home mourning and lamenting over the loss of his foal. Now, he had heard that the queen was very kind and gracious, because she had been herself a peasant. So he went to her and begged her to help him to get back his foal. She readily agreed to do so, on condition that he would promise not to betray her. 'To-morrow morning, early,' she said, 'when the king goes on the parade, place yourself in the road by which he passes. Take with you a fishing-rod, and act as if you were fishing in the ditch, which will be dry; but never mind, pull in your line, and jerk it up and down just as if you had a bite; and if the king or anyone asks you what you are doing, give the answer that I will tell you.'

So the next day the peasant seated himself by the road, and began to fish in a dry ditch. As soon as the king came by he saw him, and sent his attendants to ask the foolish man what he was about. The peasant, on being questioned by the attendant as to what he was doing, replied, 'I am fishing.'

'Fishing!' he replied; 'why, you will get none if you fish for a year; there is no water.'

'Ah,' said the peasant, 'it is quite as easy for me to get fish without water as for an ox to be the parent of a horse's foal.'

The attendant went back with this answer to the king. The king desired the peasant to be brought before him, and told him he was quite sure that he could not have thought of such an answer himself, and desired him instantly to tell him from whom he had it.

But the peasant refused to admit that the answer was not his own; and he was therefore taken away from the king's presence and beaten, and ill-treated, and bound in fetters, and at last he was obliged to disclose that the queen had told him what to say and do.

As soon as the king returned home, he went to his wife in great anger, and said: 'You have been false to me, and have been plotting with a peasant to insult me; now go home to where you came from—to your peasant's home; you shall not be my wife any longer.'

He told her, however, to take with her from the castle whatever she loved best in the world, and that should be her farewell gift from him.

'Dear husband,' she replied, 'if you wish it, I will do so.'

Then she threw her arms round his neck, kissed him, and said she was ready to wish him good-bye, if he would take one parting cup with her. Some wine, into which she had poured a sleeping-draught, was brought, and the king drank a large cupful off at once. In a few minutes he sank into a deep sleep, and then the queen, after covering him with a beautiful white linen cloth, called a servant, and desired him to carry the king out and place him in a carriage that stood at the door. The queen then got in and drove the king to her father's little cottage, and on arriving there he was laid on the bed. The king slept for many hours, but at last he awoke, and, finding himself alone, exclaimed, 'Where am I?' and called his servants, but none were there.

At last his wife came in and approached the bed, and said: 'Dear lord and king, you told me to take with me from the castle whatever was best and dearest; now, I have nothing in the world better or dearer than you, therefore I have brought you with me.'

On hearing this, tears stood in the king's eyes. 'Dearest wife,' he said, 'from this hour we belong to each other.'

So he took her back to the royal castle; she was again his dear wife, from whom nothing but death could divide him.

DOCTOR KNOW-ALL.

THERE lived once a poor peasant named Krebs, who drove with two oxen and a cart containing a load of wood through the town, and sold it to a doctor for two dollars. When he went in to receive his money the doctor was at dinner, and the peasant looked at all the good things on the table till he began to long for some of them, and to wish he had been a doctor.

He remained standing for awhile after he had received his money, and at last asked if he could not also become a doctor.

'Oh yes,' was the reply; 'that can easily be managed.'

'What must I do?' asked the peasant.

'You must first buy an A B C book, one in which there is a picture of a cock. Secondly, you must turn your waggon and oxen into money, and buy a suit of clothes such as a doctor should wear. Thirdly, have a sign painted for yourself with the words, "I am Doctor Know-all!" and have it nailed above your house-door.'

The peasant followed the doctor's advice, and after awhile obtained patients, but not many.

About this time a rich nobleman was robbed of some money.

It was told to this nobleman that a clever doctor, named Doctor Know-all, lived in the town, who would most likely tell him where to find the lost treasure, and who had stolen it. So the nobleman ordered his carriage, and drove into the town. On seeing him he asked him if he were Dr. Know-all. 'Yes I am,' he said.

'Will you, then, go with me and discover the thief, and get back the stolen property?'

'I am willing to accompany you, my lord,' he replied, 'my wife, Gretchen, may go also.'

The nobleman was quite agreeable to this request, and

Desiring them to take seats in his carriage, they drove away together.

As soon as they arrived at the house dinner was laid, and Doctor Know-all and his wife seated themselves at the table, and the servants waited upon them. When the first servant placed a dish on the table containing some delicacy, the doctor touched his wife with his elbow, and said in a low voice, 'Grethel, that is the first.'

He only meant the first servant to bring the different courses. The man thought, however, that he was speaking of him as the first of the thieves; and, as this was the truth, he was in a dreadful fright, and when he got out into the hall, he said to his companions: 'That doctor knows everything we have been doing; he has just said that I am the first!'

On hearing this the other servants felt almost afraid to go into the dining-hall; but they were obliged to perform their duty, especially as their master was present. Another servant, therefore, appeared at the second course.

The moment he placed a dish on the table, he heard the doctor say to his wife, 'That is the second!'

The man was as much alarmed as his fellow-servant, and got out of the room as quickly as he could. It was the same with the third, for as each appeared the doctor spoke of him to his wife, and they were all obliged to assist in waiting at table. When the fourth servant brought in a dish, and placed it on the table, the nobleman, wishing to prove the cleverness of his visitor, asked him to say what was under the cover.

Now, it happened to be a crab, which, of course, the doctor did not know, so he looked at the covered dish, and felt that he was in a great dilemma, from which he could not escape; so he said in a low tone: 'Krebs! Krebs! what will you do!'

But the nobleman only heard the word Krebs,* and he cried eagerly: 'Yes, it is a crab! Ah, I see now that you know

everything, and you will be able to tell me where my money is and who has stolen it !

The servants were all terribly alarmed, and winked at the doctor to come out to their offices. As soon as he could get away from the table he went out, and they all came round him, owned that five of them had stolen the money, and offered him in their terror money to any amount if he would only betray them. He promised on condition that they would show him where they had hidden the money ; and they took him to the spot at once.

On this the doctor was quite satisfied, and, returning to the dining-room, seated himself at the table, and said : ' My friend, I will now consult my book, and discover where the money is concealed.'

The fifth servant, who wanted to hear whether the doctor knew any more about them, crept into the hall, and hid himself to listen. Not thinking of a listener, the doctor pulled out his book, and turned over leaf after leaf, pretending to find the necessary information. At last, addressing the pretended nobleman, he exclaimed : ' You are there, but you will have to come out !'

The hidden man, supposing that the doctor spoke to him, sprang out full of terror, crying : ' The man knows everything !'

Doctor Know-all at last took the nobleman to the place where the money was concealed ; but he did not tell who had stolen it. So, in addition to the reward offered for the discovery, he received also a good sum from the servants in reward for not betraying them, and became a man of great renown.

CLEVER FOLK.

ONE day a countryman fetched his hazel stick out of the field and said to his wife, 'Irine, I am going away into the country, and shall return in three days. If the cattle-dealer should come to trade with us, and wish to buy our three cows, you can let him see them; but you must not allow them to go for less than two hundred dollars—not a farthing less: do you hear?'

'Be off with you, if you are going,' she replied. 'I will do as you say.'

'I hope you will,' he cried. 'But you are little better than a child who has fallen on its head. You'll forget all I have told you in an hour. But I can only promise you that if you make a stupid mess of this business I will stripe your back till it is black and blue, and that without any colour, but with this bare stick that I hold in my hand; and the marks shall last for a whole year. Therefore you had better not forget.'

The next morning the cattle-dealer came, and the wife had no occasion to say much to him. When he had seen the cows, and had asked the price, he said, 'I am quite willing to take the animals. They are very cheap.' Then she unfastened the chain, and drove them out of the stable.

But when they reached the yard-gate, and the driver wished to lead them out, the wife seized him by the sleeve, and said, 'You must first give me the two hundred dollars, or I cannot let them go with you.'

'All right,' answered the man. 'But I have forgotten to buckle on my money-pouch this morning. Do not be uneasy. You shall have security till I pay. I will take two cows with me, and leave the third behind with you, so that will be a good guarantee for my return.'

The woman was deceived. She allowed the man to march

off with the two cows, and said to herself, 'How pleased Hans will be when he sees how cleverly I have managed!'

The farmer came home, as he had said, on the third day, and asked immediately whether the cows had been sold.

'Yes, most certainly, dear Hans,' answered the wife, 'for two hundred dollars, as you told me. They are scarcely worth so much, but the man took them without the slightest objection to the price.'

'Where is the money?' asked the farmer.

'I have not got it yet,' she replied. 'He had forgotten his money-bag; but he will bring it soon, and he has left good security behind him.'

'What has he left?' asked the farmer.

'One of the three cows,' she said. 'He would not take the one till he had paid for the other two. I have managed very cleverly. I have kept back the smallest cow because it is the least.'

In a rage and fury, the man lifted his stick to inflict upon his wife the stripes with which he had threatened her. Suddenly he let it fall again without touching her, and said, 'You are the most stupid goose that ever waddled about on this earth, but I pity you. However, I am going again into the country for three days, and if I find anyone during that time as stupid as you are, then you will escape; but if I do not, then you shall receive your well-deserved reward without mercy.'

Then he went out into the high road, seated himself on a stone, and waited for something to pass. Presently he saw a waggon coming along, in the middle of which a woman stood instead of sitting, on a truss of straw which lay near the cow in order to guide them better. 'Ah,' thought the man, 'that is what I seek.' He sprang up as he spoke, and ran before the waggon, here and there, as if he was undecided which way to go.

'What do you want, gossip?' said the woman. 'I do not know you; where do you come from?'

'I have fallen from heaven,' he replied, 'and have no idea how to get back again; can you take me there?'

'No,' said the woman, 'I do not know the way; but as you have come from heaven, can you tell me how my husband is going on? He has been there these three years; you must have seen him.'

'I have seen him, certainly,' replied the man; 'but it is not every man that is contented. Your husband has to watch the sheep, and the dear animals give him plenty of work. They run on the mountains, and wander into the wilderness, and he has to run after them and bring them home. In consequence of this, his clothes are torn to rags, and are falling off his back, and there are no tailors there; they are not admitted, as you know we are told in the story.'

'Now, who would have thought of that?' cried the wife. 'But stay, I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll go and fetch my husband's Sunday coat, which hangs in the wardrobe, then he will look respectable; that is, if you will be good enough to take it.'

'No use at all,' said the farmer; 'no one can venture to take clothes to heaven; they are always taken away at the door.'

'Well, then,' cried the woman, 'I sold yesterday my beautiful meadow, and a fine lot of money I got for it. I will send him that. If you stick a purse of money in your pocket, no one will notice it as you go in.'

'If nothing else can be done,' said the man, 'I will oblige you in this matter.'

'Stay here, and sit down for awhile, then,' said the woman; 'I will go and fetch the purse, and be back again very soon. I shall not sit on the truss of straw; but stand up, so that I can guide the oxen better.'

Away she drove as she spoke, and the man thought to himself: 'She has a good stock of folly, at all events, and if she really brings the money, my wife will be lucky, and escape

without a single stripe.' He had not waited long before he saw her running back to him with the purse of money in her hand, which she herself placed in his pocket. Then she thanked him a thousand times for his kindness, and went away.

But on reaching home she met her son coming from the field, and told him what an unexpected thing had happened to her. 'I am so delighted,' she continued, 'that I have found the opportunity to send something to my poor husband, who suffers from want of clothes and money. Who would have thought that there was any want in heaven?'

The son was full of wonder at this account; but presently he exclaimed, 'Mother, men do not come from heaven every day. I will go out immediately and try to find this man, for I should like to see him; he would be able to tell me how it looks up there, and what work there is to do.' So he went out, saddled his horse, and rode away quickly.

He had not gone far before he saw the farmer sitting under a willow-tree, counting the money that was in the purse. 'Have you seen a man pass here who has just come from heaven?' asked the youth.

'Yes,' answered the farmer, 'but he has set out to return, and has taken the road over yonder mountain, which is rather a nearer way. You could overtake him if you rode quickly.'

'Ah,' said the young man, 'I have been the whole day here at work, and the ride here has tired me. You know the man, so will you be so good as to seat yourself on my horse, and overtake him, and bring him back here?'

'Ah,' thought the farmer, 'here is another with no wick in his lamp. Why should I not do you this favour?' said he aloud, as he mounted the horse, and rode away at a rapid trot.

The young man remained sitting where the farmer had left him till night came on, but he did not return. 'Ah, well,' he thought, 'the man was, no doubt, in a great hurry to get back to heaven, and the farmer has lent him the horse to take to my father.' He went home, and told his mother what had

happened, and finished by saying, 'The man has, no doubt, sent the horse to my father, that he may not have to run about so much on foot after the sheep.'

'It is all right,' she replied, 'for your legs are still young, and you can easily go about on foot.'

As soon as the farmer returned home, he placed the horse in the stable, near the remaining cow, and then went in to his wife. 'Irine,' he said, 'you are very lucky. I have found two who are still more silly fools than you are; this time, therefore, you will get off without one stripe. I will reserve them for another occasion.'

Then he took out his pipe, lighted it, seated himself in the old arm-chair, and said: 'This has been a good speculation—a sleek horse for two poor lean cows, and a purse full of money into the bargain. If stupidity always brought me so much as this, I should be willing to honour it.' So thought the farmer, but you no doubt prefer the simple folk.

STORIES ABOUT SNAKES.

I.

THERE was once a little child whose mother gave him every night a small bowl of milk and broken bread, and the child sat himself down in the yard with it. But when he began to eat, there came from a crevice in the wall a house-snake, plunged his head into the milk, and ate with him. The child was so pleased that when he sat down with his dish, and the snake had not come, he would call out:

'Snake, snake, come quickly, snake,
And of my bread-and-milk partake.'

Then came the snake, and took the food.

It showed itself grateful also, for it brought the child out of its homely treasure all sorts of pretty things, sparkling stones, pearls, and gold playthings. But the snake drank only the milk and left the bread. Then the child took his little spoon and hit it gently on the head with it, and said, 'Little thing, eat also some bread.' The mother, who was standing in the kitchen, heard the child speaking to someone, and when she saw that it was hitting a snake with a spoon, she ran out with a piece of wood, and killed the good little animal. From that time a change came over the child. As long as the snake had eaten with him, he was strong and big, but now he lost his beautiful red cheeks, and grew thin. In a short time the dove began to cry in the night, and the redbreasts gathered together twigs and leaves for a funeral garland for the child to lay on his bier.

II.

AN orphan child sat on the town wall spinning. There she saw a snake come from an opening in the bricks. She quickly spread out her blue silk neckerchief close beside her; this the snakes like much, and will creep only on it.

As soon as the snake saw it, it went back, came again and brought a small golden crown, which it laid on the neckerchief and went away. The girl took up the crown; it glittered, and was the finest spun gold. Not long after, the snake came again, but as it did not see the crown, it crept back to the wall, and struck its head from grief against it, as long as it had strength to do so, until it lay dead. If the maiden had not taken the crown, the snake would have brought her more of its treasure out of the hole.

THE MILLER'S BOY AND HIS CAT.

A MILLER once lived in an old mill; he had neither wife nor children, and three miller's apprentices worked for him. When they had been with him some years, he said to them one day: 'I am getting old, and I shall soon want to sit in the chimney-corner without work. Whichever of you, therefore, brings me the best horse shall have the mill, and only have to support me till my death.'

The youngest of these apprentices was the drudge, and the others considered him silly; they were also envious at the thought that he might have the mill, so they determined to prevent him from trying for it. They started, however, together on their expedition, but when they got outside the town, the two said to him: 'Silly Hans, you had better stay here; you would never find a horse, if you were to try for your whole life.'

Hans, however, would go with them, and as night came on they arrived at a cave, in which they laid themselves down to sleep. The two elder youths, who fancied themselves very clever, waited till Hans was asleep, and then rose up and ran away as fast as they could, leaving him behind alone, and thought they had managed most cleverly to get rid of him.

Hans awoke with the sun, and found himself lying in a deep hole, and after looking all about him, and seeing no one near, he exclaimed: 'Oh dear! where am I?' Then he roused himself and scrambled out of the hole, and wandered into the wood. 'Ah,' he thought, 'here I am in the wood, quite forsaken and alone. How am I ever to find a horse?'

As he walked on in deep thought, a little tabby cat met him, and said to him in a most friendly manner: 'Hans, what can I do for you?'

'Ah,' he replied, 'you can't help me, puss.'

'Well,' she said, 'I know exactly what you are longing for:'

you want a beautiful horse. Come with me, then, and be my true knight for seven years, and I will give you one more beautiful than you have ever seen in all your life.'

'This is a wonderful cat,' thought Hans; 'however, I will see if what she says is true.'

Then she took him with her to a little enchanted castle, in which there was nothing but cats as servants, who waited upon the tabby cat. They sprang nimbly up the steps before the visitor, and seemed good-natured, merry creatures.

In the evening, while the mistress and Hans sat at supper, three of them came in and performed music. One played the violin, another the bass-viol, and the third blew out his cheeks as much as possible in playing the bugle. When supper was ended, the other cats cleared the table and moved it away.

Then said the mistress cat: 'Come, Hans, we will have a dance: will you dance with me?'

'No,' he replied; 'I could not dance with a pussy-cat. I never did such a thing in my life.'

'Oh, well, never mind,' she said, and told the other cats to take him to bed.

They lighted him to a little sleeping-room; and then one pulled off his shoes, another his stockings, and as soon as he was in bed they blew out the light and left him.

The next morning they came again and helped him out of bed; one pulled on his stockings, another tied on his garters, and a third washed his face, while a fourth dried it with her tail.

'That is certainly a very soft towel,' he said to himself. But he had also to serve the cat, and to cut up wood into little pieces. For this purpose he had an axe and a wedge, and a saw of silver, and a chopper of gold. So he chopped the wood small, remained in the house, had plenty of good eating and drinking, and saw no one but the tabby cat and her domestics.

At last one day she said to him: 'Go out into my meadow,

Hans, and mow the grass, and make it into hay;' and for this purpose she gave him a silver scythe and a gold whetstone, and told him to be sure to bring them back again safely.

Away went Hans, and soon accomplished his task, bringing home the hay and the tools to the house, as he had been told.

'Am I to have my reward now?' he asked.

'No,' she replied; 'you must do something else for me first. You will find timber outside, and carpenter's tools all of silver, and everything necessary for building, so I want you to build me a house.'

Hans set to work and soon built the house, and when it was finished he said: 'I have done all you told me, but still there is no horse for me.'

By this time the seven years had really gone by, so the cat asked him if he would like to see his horse.

'Yes, indeed,' he replied.

So she led him to a small house, and when the door was opened he saw twelve horses. Ah, how proud and spirited they looked! and their skins shone and glittered so brightly that his heart was in his mouth for joy.

And now the cat took him into the castle, gave him a good dinner, and said: 'I shall not give you the horse yet; but you must go home, and in three days I will come myself and bring it to you.'

So she started him off, and herself showed him the way back to the mill.

During the time he had stayed with her, however, she had given him no new clothes, so that he was obliged to wear those he had brought with him, and a smock-frock, which was too short and small for him. When he reached home he found the two other lads had returned and brought their horses with them; but one was lame and the other blind.

'Well, Hans,' they said, when they saw him, 'where is your horse?'

'It will be here in three days,' he replied.

They laughed at him, and said: 'Ah, that is very likely! just catch any fine horses coming here for you!'

Hans said nothing, but went into the room; and when the miller saw him, he cried: 'You shall not sit at the table with us in such a torn and ragged condition! If anyone should come in I should be ashamed to see you here.'

So they gave him something to eat outside.

When evening came, the other apprentices would not let him sleep in the same room with them, so he was obliged to go out and creep into the hen-house and lie down on the straw.

The third morning came, and very early, not long after they were all up, a splendid carriage drawn by six horses drove to the door. The horses were as beautiful and as sleek as those Hans had seen, and their harness glittered in the light. Dr. with the carriage were several servants, and one of them led a most beautiful horse, which was for the poor miller's boy.

The carriage stopped, and a beautiful princess alighted, who was no other than the tabby cat, whom Hans had released from enchantment by serving her willingly for seven years. She entered the mill and asked the miller where his youngest apprentice was.

'We cannot have him in the mill now,' he replied, 'he is so torn and ragged; he is outside in the hen-house.'

'I will fetch him myself, then,' said the princess.

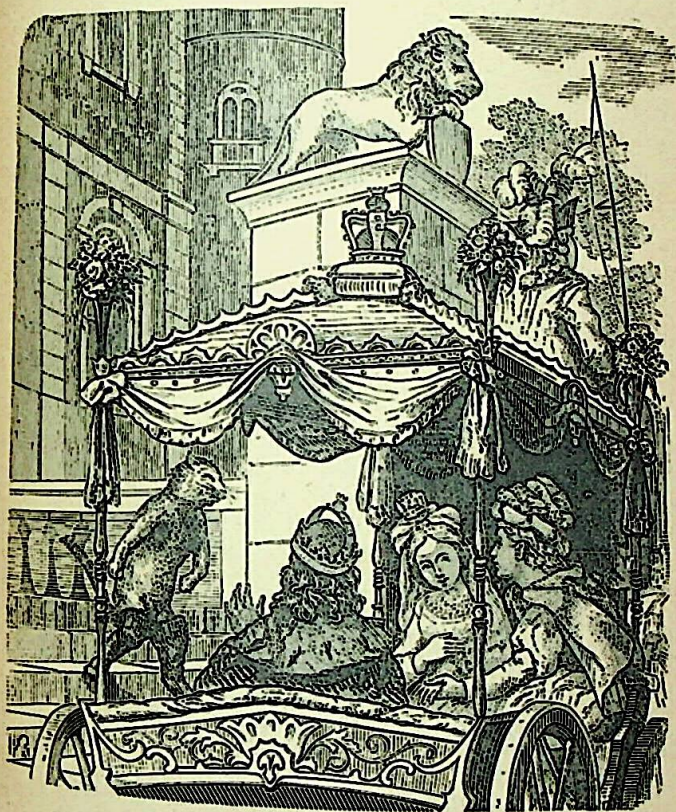
So she called her servants, and they followed her with new and elegant clothes, and she told them to lead him to the house and desire him to throw off the rags and the old smock-frock, and wash and dress himself in the new attire; and when he had done so no prince could have looked more elegant.

Meanwhile, the princess returned to the mill, and asked to see the horses which the other apprentices had brought, and she found that one was blind and the other lame. Then she desired her servants to bring the horse which was intended for Hans; and when it was brought into the court, and the miller

had looked at it, the princess said: 'That horse is for your youngest apprentice.'

'Then,' said the miller, 'he must have the mill.'

'No,' said the princess, 'he will not need it; you may keep the mill and the horse also.'



A SPLENDID CARRIAGE DRAWN BY SIX HORSES DROVE TO THE DOOR.

And then Hans appeared, splendidly dressed, and she desired him to take a seat in her carriage, and they drove away together.

They went first to the small house which Hans had built

with the silver tools: it was now a beautiful castle, all shining with gold and silver. They were soon after married, and Hava became so rich that he never wanted anything again as long as he lived. No one, therefore, can ever say that because a man is silly he will never be rich.

THE TWO WANDERERS.

MOUNTAIN and valley do not meet, but the children of men do, both good and wicked. It happened once that a shoemaker and a tailor met on a journey. The tailor was a good-looking little fellow, always good-tempered and merry; he saw the shoemaker coming towards him from the other side, and perceived that he carried his box of tools with him, so he cried out jocosely, in the words of a merry song:

‘Sew well your seams,
Draw out your thread,
Rub it right and left with wax,
Work till ’tis time to go to bed.’

The shoemaker, however, could not bear a joke. He made a wry face as if he had been drinking vinegar, and looked as if he were going to collar the tailor. The merry little fellow, however, only laughed, and, holding up a bottle to him, said: ‘I did not mean any harm, friend; just have a drink, it will help you to swallow down the bile.’

The shoemaker took such a large draught that the thunder-clouds on his face began to disperse. He gave back the bottle to the tailor, and said: ‘I have often heard it said that men speak better after drinking than when they are thirsty. Shall we travel together?’

‘With all my heart,’ said the tailor, ‘if your inclination is to

go to a large town, where we may most likely find plenty of work.'

'That is just what I should wish to do,' replied the shoemaker. 'In a little nest like our village there is no work to be had, and in the country people like to go bare-footed.'

So they agreed to travel together, and went away on their journey, always placing one foot before the other like a weasel in the snow. They had plenty of time for walking, but very little to eat and drink; so when they arrived at a town they both tried for work in their different trades, and the tailor looked so fresh and lively, and had such bright, rosy cheeks, that he readily obtained work; and when he had the luck, his master's daughters would give him a kiss behind the door, as he went away. Generally, when he again joined the shoemaker, he had the most money in his purse.

The peevish shoemaker would make a long face, and say: 'The greater the rogue, the greater the luck.' But the little tailor only laughed and sang, and shared all that he earned with his comrade. If he had only a couple of pence jingling in his pocket, he would take them out and throw them on the table so joyfully that the glasses would dance again, and it might be said of him: 'Easily earned, easily spent.'

They had been travelling for some time, when they arrived near a large forest, through which lay the road to the chief town. Two footpaths led to this town, one of which would occupy seven days to traverse, and the other only two; but neither of them knew which was the shorter way.

The two wanderers seated themselves under an oak tree, and began to consult respecting what quantity of food they should take with them.

The shoemaker said: 'A man ought always to prepare for the future. I shall take bread enough to last seven days.'

'What!' cried the tailor, 'drag bread enough for seven days on your back, like a beast of burden, and not be able to look about you? I shall trust to Providence, and not trouble my-

self. The money in my pocket will keep as good in summer as in winter, but bread will become dry in the heat, and mouldy in the damp weather. My coat is also a little out at elbows; besides, after all, why should we not find the right way? The days' provisions is all I shall carry.'

So each took what he chose, and they started with hope into the wood.

The forest was as still as a church when they entered it; not a breath of air stirred, no brook murmured, the song of the birds was hushed, and through the thick foliage not a sunbeam could penetrate. The shoemaker said not a word, but the pressure of the weight of bread on his shoulders obliged him every now and then to wipe off the drops of perspiration from his morose and sullen countenance. The tailor, however, was quite lively, sprang here and there, picked off a leaf or sang a song, and thought that heaven itself must be pleased to see him so happy.

Two days passed, but on the third day the end of the forest seemed as far off as ever, and the tailor had eaten all his bread. By this time his spirits had sunk an ell lower; he did not lose his courage, however, but still trusted to Providence and his own good luck. On the evening of the third day he laid himself down hungry and tired under a tree, and rose again next morning still hungry; and so he went on till the fourth day, and when the shoemaker sat down on the stump of a fallen tree to eat his supper, the tailor could not help looking at him. But when he begged for a piece of bread, the other laughed scornfully, and said: 'You that have always been so merry can now know what it is to feel miserable. The birds sing in the morning early, but in the evening they become the prey of the hawk.' In short, he was quite without pity or sympathy.

But on the fifth morning the poor tailor could not hold out any longer, and from exhaustion could scarcely utter a word: his cheeks were white, and his eyes quite red.

Then said the wicked shoemaker : ' I will give you a piece of bread to-day, if you will let me put out your right eye.'

The unhappy tailor, whose only thought then was how to save his life, felt that he had no other means of doing so, and that he could not help himself. He wept once more with his two eyes, and then submitted to the cruel shoemaker, who must have had a heart of stone.

There came into the mind of the poor tailor at this moment something that his mother had once said when he had stolen something nice out of the store-room : ' Eat as much as you may, and suffer what you must.'

As soon as he had eaten his dearly-bought bread, he was able again to get on his legs, forgot his misfortune, and comforted himself with the reflection that he could still see well enough with the eye that was left. But on the sixth day the hunger was fiercer than ever, and seemed as if it were consuming his very vitals. In the evening he fell under a tree, and on the morning of the seventh day was unable to rise from exhaustion, while death stared him in the face.

Then the wretched shoemaker spoke again : ' I will have compassion on you, and give you another piece of bread, if you will consent to lose your left eye also ; but you can do as you like.'

Then the tailor recalled his light-hearted, thoughtless life, and praying to God for pardon, said to his comrade : ' Do what you will ; I will endure what I must, but remember that every moment of your life is judged, and an hour will come when your wicked acts to me will be requited. In my best days I have always shared with you what I had earned. My trade is an art that requires to be carried on stitch by stitch, and if I lose both eyes I shall be unable to work any more, and shall be obliged to beg ; but if I am to be blind, do not leave me here alone in the forest, or I must die of starvation.'

The shoemaker, who had driven all good thoughts out of his heart, would not listen ; he took his knife and put out the

poor tailor's left eye, and then, after placing a piece of bread in his hand, gave him a stick, and led him away. About sunset they came out of the forest, and in a field near stood a gallows. To this the shoemaker led the blind tailor, laid him down under it, and went away and left him.

Overcome with fatigue, pain, and hunger, the unfortunate man sunk to sleep, and slept the whole night. At daybreak he awoke, but knew not that above where he lay hung two poor criminals, and that on each of their heads sat a crow.

Just as he awoke, one of the crows began to speak to the other. 'Brother,' he said, 'are you awake?'

'Yes, I am awake,' replied the other.

'Then I will tell you something,' said the first again. 'The dew which has fallen around us to-night will restore the eyesight to any blind person who washes with it. If the blind only knew it, how many could be restored to sight by this dew, who never believed that it is possible!'

When the tailor heard this, he took out his pocket-handkerchief, dragged it over the grass, and when it was well saturated with the dew, he washed out the cavities of his eyes with it. Almost at the same moment was fulfilled what he had heard, and a pair of new, perfect eyes filled up the empty sockets. A little longer, and then the tailor looked up, and saw the sun rising behind the mountain-top, and on the plain before him lay the great city, with its noble gates and its towers while the golden pinnacles and crosses that crowned their summits glittered in the sun's first morning rays. He could distinguish every leaf on the trees, he saw the birds fluttering among the branches above him, and the gnats dancing in the morning air. Then he took a sewing-needle out of his pocket, and when he found that he could thread it as well as ever, his heart bounded for joy. He threw himself on his knees, and thanked God for the unmerited mercy, and sang his morning song of praise. He did not forget to pray for the two poor criminals who hung there, like clock-weights, swinging to and

to as the wind moved them. Then he took his bundle on his back, and, soon forgetting his past pain and sorrow, continued his journey, singing and whistling as he went.

The first living thing he met was a brown foal, running and frisking in freedom in the field. He caught him by the mane, for he wished to mount and ride to the city; but the foal begged for his freedom.

'I am still young,' said he, 'and even a lighter tailor than you would break my back. Leave me to run free till I become strong. Very likely a time may come when I shall be able to repay your kindness.'

'Run away, then,' said the tailor; 'I see you are a wild young colt.' He gave him one gentle stroke with a switch over his back, which sent him kicking up his hind-legs with joy at his freedom, and galloping over hedges and ditches.

The tailor, however, had not eaten anything since the day before. 'The dew,' he said, 'has filled my eyes, but bread has not filled my mouth; the first that I meet of anything eatable I must keep for food.'

At this moment a stork stepped quite gravely across the meadow. 'Stop, stop!' cried the tailor, and caught him by the leg. 'I do not know whether you are good to eat, but my hunger allows me no time to inquire. I must cut off your head and roast you.'

'Do not do that,' answered the stork. 'I am a sacred bird, whom no one ever thinks of injuring, and I am of very great use to man; leave me my life, and I may be able, at some time or other, to recompense you for it.'

'Take yourself off, then, Cousin Long-legs,' said the tailor. The stork rose, let his long legs hang down, and flew gently away.

'What shall I do now?' said the tailor to himself; 'my hunger is constantly increasing, and my stomach is getting more empty; whatever comes in my way next is lost.' Almost as he spoke, he came to a pond where two young ducks were

swimming about. 'You have come at my call,' said he, ^{seeing} one of them; and he was just going to wring its neck, ^{when} an old duck, who stood among the rushes on the bank, ^{hearing} to quack loudly, and, swimming towards him with stretched out beak, begged him most earnestly to spare her dear children.

'Think, now,' she said, 'how your own mother would be grieved if you had been taken away from her to be killed.'

'Be still, now,' said the good-natured tailor; 'you shall keep your children.' And he placed the captive again in the water.

As he turned away, he saw before him an old tree, ^{just} hollow, and from the hole wild bees were flying in and out. 'Here I shall find a reward for my kind actions,' said the tailor; 'the honey will refresh me.'

But the queen bee came out in great displeasure, and said, 'If you disturb my people, and destroy my nest, we will use our stings upon you, and they will be in your skin like a thousand red-hot needles; but if you leave us in peace, and go your way, at some time or another we may be able to do you service.'

The tailor saw at once that there was nothing to be got from the hollow tree. 'Three empty dishes,' he said, 'and that of the fourth nothing; this is a bad dinner-time.' So he dragged himself on with his hungry stomach to the town, where he arrived about noon. At the inn he found a dinner already cooked for him, and he lost no time in seating himself at the table.

As soon as his hunger was appeased, he determined to go out and seek for work, and very soon found a master and good situation. He had, however, learnt the groundwork of the trade so thoroughly that it was not long before he became quite a noted tailor. Everyone wanted to have his coat made by the clever little man. Each day gained him fresh employment, and although he would say, 'I cannot rise any higher'

now,' at last he was appointed by the king to be tailor to the court.

However, as it often happens in the world, on the very same day his former comrade was made court shoemaker. When he caught sight of the tailor, and saw that he had again two perfect eyes, his conscience so tormented him that he thought to himself: 'I must dig a pit for this man ere he takes revenge on me.'

But those who dig a pit for another generally fall into it themselves.

So in the evening, when he had finished the day's work, and twilight drew on, the shoemaker slipped quietly in and obtained an audience of the king, and said: 'My lord king, the tailor who is appointed to the court is, no doubt, a very clever man; but he has boasted that he can recover the golden crown belonging to the kingdom, which was lost in days gone by.'

'Indeed!' replied the king, 'that is very pleasant news. Let the tailor know that I expect him to set about finding this crown to-morrow morning, and unless he succeeds he is to leave this city for ever.'

'Oho!' cried the tailor, 'a fellow cannot give more than he has; if this surly king desires what it is not possible for anyone to perform, I shall not wait for to-morrow morning, but take myself out of the town at once.'

He corded his bundle; but as he went out of the gate he was sorry that he had to give up his good fortune and leave the town where it had gone so well with him.

He came to the pond where he had made acquaintance with the ducks. The old duck was on the shore; she had left her young ones, and was pluming her feathers with her beak. She recognised him immediately, and asked him what made him hang down his head.

'You would not wonder if you knew what has happened to me,' he said; and then he told her of his fate.

'If that is all,' said the duck, 'we can advise you what to

do. The crown was thrown into the water of this pond, and there it now lies at the bottom. We can soon fetch it for you. In the meantime, spread your pocket-handkerchief on the shore.'

She, with her young ones, quickly dived down under the water, and in less than five minutes appeared again, carrying the crown on her wings, and the twelve young ones swimming round her, each supporting it with its beak. Then they came to land, and laid the crown on the pocket-handkerchief.

You would have been surprised to see how beautiful it looked when the sun shone upon it, for it glittered with thousands of precious stones. The tailor tied the crown up in his handkerchief, and carried it to the king, who was so overjoyed at seeing it again that he hung a gold chain round the tailor's neck.

When the shoemaker found that he had made a false wax, he thought of something else to ruin the tailor. So he went to the king, and said: 'My lord king, the tailor is still boasting. He says that the royal castle, complete in every way both inside and out, can be modelled in wax.'

On this the king sent for the tailor, and commanded him to model the castle in wax, and said that if he did not bring it in a few hours, or if there should want even a nail in the wall, he would be confined underground for the remainder of his life.

'Oh,' thought the tailor, when he heard this, 'it gets worse and worse; that is more than mortal man can do.'

So he again took his bundle on his back, and wandered away.

When he came again to the hollow tree, he seated himself with his head drooping, and feeling very sad. Presently the bees came out, and amongst them the queen-bee, who, when she saw him, asked him if he had a stiff neck, as he held his head so low.

'Ah, no,' answered the tailor, 'something else.' Then he told her what the king required him to do.

Immediately the bees began to buzz and to hum, and the queen-bee said to him: 'Go back to your house, and come again in the morning; bring a large cloth with you, and you will find it is all right.'

So he turned his steps homewards. But the bees flew to the king's castle, in at the windows, and examined every corner, and saw exactly how everything was arranged.

Then they hastened back, and reproduced the castle in wax in the most perfect manner, so that it appeared to grow before the eye. By evening it was finished, and when the tailor made his appearance in the morning, there stood the beautiful building quite ready for him—not a nail on the wall missing, nor even a tile on the roof. It was delicately white like snow, and yet sweet as honey. The tailor packed it up carefully in his handkerchief, and carried it to the king.

The king could not sufficiently admire it. He placed it in a saloon, and presented the tailor with a large stone house. The shoemaker, however, was not yet satisfied.

A third time he appeared before the king, and said: 'My lord king, it has come to the ears of the tailor that in the court of the palace there is not a well or a fountain, and he boasts that he could cause water to flow there as clear as crystal, and to the height of a tall man!'

So the king sent for the tailor, and said to him: 'If by to-morrow morning you do not cause a stream of water to flow in my court as you have promised, then shall the executioner in the same court make you shorter by a head!'

The poor tailor did not take long to decide what to do. He hastened away from the town with the tears rolling down his cheeks, for this time his life was at stake.

As he walked along full of grief, the foal to which he had granted liberty came springing towards him. It had now grown to a beautiful brown horse.

'Now is the time,' he said, as he saw the tailor, 'to requite your kindness to me. I know already what you want, and I

shall soon be able to help you. Jump up,' he continued; 'my back could carry two such as you now.'

The tailor, on hearing this, took heart, sprung with one leap on the horse, which started off at full speed, and did not stop till he reached the castle-yard. Then he galloped round the court as quick as lightning three times. The third time he plunged violently; and as he did so, a terrible crack appeared in the ground under his feet, and in the same moment a quantity of earth was shot into the air and over the castle, and after it rose a stream of water as high as the man and the horse. The water was as clear as crystal, and the sun's rays sparkled on it in various colours.

When the king saw it, he stood still in wondering amazement, and then embraced the tailor in the presence of all his people.

But this happiness did not last long. Now, the king had several daughters, each very beautiful, but no son; so the wicked shoemaker came a fourth time to the king, and said to him: 'My lord king, there is no end to the tailor's boasting; he is declaring now that he can bring a little son to the king through the air.'

Upon this the king sent for the tailor, and said to him: 'If within nine days a little son is brought to me through any means, then you shall have my eldest daughter to wife.'

'That is really a tempting reward,' thought the tailor, 'but it is out of the power of any man to accomplish. The chimney is too high for me; if I attempt to climb for them to the branch will break under me, and I shall have a fall.' He went home, seated himself cross-legged on his work-table, and reflected on what would be the best way to act. 'It is no use,' he said at last. 'I will go away; they will not let me stay here in peace.' He got down from the table once more, picked up his bundle, and hastened to the gates.

When he reached a meadow he saw his old friend the shoemaker standing like a philosopher contemplating a frog which croaked

near him, and which he at last swallowed. Then he turned, saw the tailor, and advanced to greet him. 'I see,' he said, raising himself, 'that you have your knapsack on your back. Why are you leaving the town?'

Then the tailor told him that the king required of him what it was impossible for him to do, and then began to mourn over his unhappy fate.

'Don't let any gray hairs grow out of that trouble,' said the stork; 'I will help you in your difficulty. I have already brought many babies to your town, and I can just as well bring a little prince out of the well this time as any other child. Go home, and make yourself quite comfortable; in nine days from to-day go up to the king's castle, and I will be there.'

The tailor went home, and was careful to be at the castle at the appointed time. He had not been long there when the stork appeared flying through the air, and quickly tapped at the window with his beak. The tailor opened it, and Cousin Long-legs stepped cautiously in, and walked gravely across the smooth marble floor. He had a little child in his beak, who was as beautiful as an angel, and it stretched out its little hands to the queen. The stork advanced and laid the child on the queen's lap, and she kissed it, and pressed it to her heart, and was almost beside herself with joy.

Before he flew away, the stork took his travelling pouch from his shoulder and presented it to the queen. It contained a horn full of coloured sugar-plums to be divided among the young princesses. The eldest, however, had not any, as she was going to be married to the merry tailor.

The tailor said: 'It seems to me as if I had been drawing lots and winning. My mother was right: she said that if we trusted to Providence, and acted honestly, we should never want.'

After this the shoemaker was ordered to leave the town; but before he went he was obliged to make the shoes in which the tailor was to dance at his wedding. His way to the forest

led him to the gallows. Full of rage and fury, and tired with the heat of the day, he threw himself down under it; and while he slept the two crows, who still sat on the heads of the hanging men, flew down and picked out his eyes. He rose and ran blindly into the wood, where it is supposed he died of starvation, for he has never been seen or heard of since.

THE SHROUD.

A MOTHER had a little son of seven years old, who was so beautiful and gentle that no one could look at him and not love him, and she herself worshipped him. He suddenly became ill, and God took him. For this loss the mother could not be comforted, but wept both day and night. Soon after the child had been buried it appeared by night in the places where it had lived and played during its life, and if the mother wept it wept also; at daylight it disappeared. As, however, the mother still never ceased weeping, it came one night in the little white shroud in which it had been placed in its coffin, and with its wreath of flowers round its head, and said: 'Oh, mother, stop weeping, or I shall never fall asleep in my coffin, for my shroud will not dry because of thy tears.'

The mother, when she heard this, was afraid, and wept no more.

The next night the child came with a little light in its hand and said: 'Look, mother, my shroud is nearly dry, and I can rest in my grave.'

Then the mother gave her sorrow to God, and bore it patiently and quietly, and the child came no more, but slept in its shroud bed in the earth.

THE JEW AMONG THE THORNS.

A RICH man once had a servant who always served him honestly and faithfully. He was the first to rise in the morning and the last to go to bed at night, and if any difficult work arose, which no one else could manage, he was ready to undertake it. Added to this, he never complained, but was contented with everything, and always merry.

At the end of his first year of service his master paid him no wages, for he said to himself, 'It is the most prudent way, and I shall save the money. He will remain in my service, I know, and work as pleasantly as ever.'

The servant made no complaint, and during the second year continued to work well and faithfully, yet at the end he was kept without any wages. Still he worked on the third year, and then the master put his hand in his pocket, but drew it out empty. At last the young man spoke.

'Master,' he said, 'I have served you well for three years, and now I want to go out and see the world; will you give me what it is right for me to have?'

'Yes,' answered the greedy old man; 'you have served me with the greatest willingness, and I am ready to reward you liberally.' He put his hand into his pocket as he spoke, and drew out three pence, and, counting them into the servant's hand, he said: 'There are three pence—one for each year—and those are as liberal wages as you would get from any master.'

The young man, who knew very little of the value of money, took up his earnings, and said to himself: 'Now that my pocket is full, I need not trouble myself any longer with hard work.'

Away he went, over hill and dale, singing and dancing with

joy at his freedom, till he came to a road with thick bushes on one side.

Out of these bushes stepped a little man, who said to him: 'Where are you going, you merry fellow? Cares don't appear to trouble you much.'

'Why should I be sad?' answered the youth. 'Have I not three years' wages jingling in my pocket?'

'How much is your wonderful treasure?' asked the dwarf.

'How much? Why, three bright pennies, good coin, rightly told.'

'Listen,' said the stranger, in reply: 'I am a poor, destitute man, too old to work; but you are young, and can easily earn your living: will you give me those three pennies?'

The young man had a kind heart, and could not help pitying those who were old, so he offered him the money, and said: 'Take it, in heaven's name; I shall never miss it.'

The little man took the money, and said: 'I see you have a kind and generous heart, therefore I will grant you three wishes—one for each penny—and each wish shall be fulfilled.'

'Aha!' cried the youth, 'you are a magician, I see. Well, if what you say is true, I will wish first for a gun which shall hit everything at which I aim; secondly, for a fiddle which, when I play it, shall oblige everyone to dance who hears it; and thirdly, that whoever I make a request to shall not be able to refuse me.'

'All these you shall have,' said the little man. Then he thrust his hand into the bush, separated the branches, and there lay a beautiful fiddle and gun, all in readiness, as if they had been ordered.

He gave them to the young man, and said: 'Whatever request you may make, no man on earth will be able to refuse.'

'What more do I want now?' said he, as the little man left him. And he continued his way, feeling more light-hearted and merry than ever. In a short time after this he met a Jew

with a long beard like a goat's, who stood listening to the song of a bird perched on the branch of a tree.

'How wonderful,' he cried, 'that such a little creature should have such a powerful voice! I wish it was mine. Oh, if I could only sprinkle a little salt on its tail, and bring it down!'

'If that is all,' cried the youth, 'the bird shall soon come down.' And, raising his gun, he aimed so correctly that the bird fell into the hedge of thorns beneath the tree.

'Go and fetch out your bird, you knave!' said he to the Jew.

'Mine?' he replied. 'Oh, I will get the bird out for myself, as you have hit it.'

Then he laid himself on the ground, and began to work his way into these bushes till the thorns held him fast. The young man, seeing him in this position, felt inclined to tease the Jew, so he took up his fiddle and began to play.

In a moment the Jew was on his legs, dancing and springing in the bush, and the longer the violin continued to play, the faster the Jew danced; and as the thorns tore his shabby coat, pulled out his long beard, and at last scratched him all over terribly, he cried out: 'Master, master, stop playing! leave off playing! I don't want to dance.'

But the youth would not listen or stop, for he thought: 'You have fleeced others often enough, my friend, and now you shall see how you like it yourself;' and as he played, the Jew danced higher and higher, till his rags were torn off and hung on the bush.

'Ah, woe is me!' cried the Jew. 'Master, master, I will



SO HE TOOK UP HIS FIDDLE AND BEGAN TO PLAY.

give you whatever you ask me—even a purse full of gold—if you will leave off playing.'

'If you are really going to be so generous,' said the young man, 'I will stop my music; but indeed I must praise your dancing: your style is perfection.' So saying, he put up his fiddle, took the purse of money the Jew had promised him, and went on his way.

The Jew stood and watched him till he was out of sight; then he screamed after him as loud as he could: 'You miserable musician! you wretched fiddler! wait till I can catch you alone; I will hunt you then till you lose the soles of your shoes, you ragamuffin! I dare say you were not worth sixpence till you got all that money out of me.' And so he went on calling him all the dreadful names he could think of. At last he stopped for want of breath, and, making his way quickly to the next town, he went before the magistrate.

'My lord judge,' he said, in a woful voice, 'I have been robbed and cruelly treated on the king's highway, by a rascally fellow who met me on the road. The very stones on the ground might pity me for what he made me suffer: my clothes torn to rags, my body all scratched, and my little bit of savings taken with my purse—bright golden ducats, each as beautiful as the other. For the love of heaven let the man be put in prison.'

'Was it a soldier,' asked the judge, 'who cut you about in this manner with his sword?'

'No, no,' replied the Jew, 'he had not even a dagger with him; but he had a gun on his shoulder and a violin which hung round his neck; the rascal can easily be recognised.'

So the judge sent his people out to find the offender, and it was not long before they met him walking along quite wearily, and upon searching they found upon him the purse of gold. When he was brought before the judge, he said: 'I never touched the Jew, nor his gold, but he gave me the purse of his own free will because I stopped my fiddling when he asked me, and said he could not endure it.'

'Heaven defend us!' cried the Jew; 'his lies swarm like flies on a wall.'

But even the judge refused to believe the young man's assertion. 'It was not likely,' he said, 'that the Jew would act so foolishly.'

Therefore the good servant was condemned to be hanged for having committed a robbery on the king's highway. As he was being led away to the scaffold the Jew screamed after him, 'You dog of a fiddler! you thief! you are justly paid out.'

The young man calmly ascended the steps to the scaffold, but on the last step he turned round and said to the judge: 'Grant me but one request before I die.'

He replied: 'You must not ask for your life; any other request I will accede to.'

'I shall not ask for my life,' replied the prisoner; 'I only request to be allowed once more to play on my violin.'

The Jew raised a loud outcry. 'I beg, I entreat you not to allow it; pray, pray don't!' he almost howled in his terror.

But the judge said: 'Why should we not grant him this short pleasure? it is the last he will have, therefore it is granted.'

Indeed, the judge could not have refused the young man, because of the power which had been given him by the dwarf in the wood. No sooner was permission granted, however, than the Jew cried: 'Oh, oh! bind me tight, tie me fast.'

But it was too late: the young man had quickly turned his violin round, and at the first chord the man who was going to bind the Jew let the rope fall, the judge, the clerk, and the officers of the court began to move and to tremble, and presently, as the full tones of the violin struck out, they all jumped up and began dancing with all their might; even the hangman dropped the rope and joined in the dance, and he and the judge and the Jew were the chief performers.

Soon the sounds of the fiddle reached the market-place, and many who came from curiosity to listen were soon among the

dancers, fat and lean, young and old, capering madly away among the rest. Even the dogs who ran by stood upon their hind-legs and began dancing about; and the longer he played the faster they all danced and the higher they sprang in the air, till at last they knocked each other's heads together and began to scream and cry out. At length the judge, quite out of breath cried: 'I will give you your life if you will stop your fiddling.'

The young man on hearing this was quite ready to stop his playing, and, hanging his violin again on his neck, he stepped down from the ladder, and approaching the Jew, who lay panting on the ground, he said: 'You rascal! now confess where you got that purse of money that you gave me, or I will begin fiddling again.'

'Oh me, oh me, I stole it, I stole it,' cried the Jew, 'and you earned it honestly.'

Then the judge had the Jew led to the scaffold and hanged as a thief.

THE LEARNED HUNTER.

THERE was once a young lad who had learnt the business of a locksmith, and he told his father he should like to go out into the world and seek his own living. His father said that he might do so, and gave him money for his journey. So he went and sought work. But after a time he got tired of his trade, and wanted to be a hunter. One day in his wanderings he met a hunter in a suit of green, who asked him where he came from and where he was going. He replied that he was a locksmith's apprentice, but that he did not like the trade, and had a desire to be a hunter, and asked the man if he

would take him as a pupil. 'Oh yes,' replied the hunter, 'if you will go with me.'

So the youth hired himself to the hunter, and remained for some years with him, and learnt the art of hunting. After this he wished to travel, and the hunter gave him for wages only an air-gun, which had, however, one good property—whoever shot with it never missed his aim. Then he went away farther till he came to a great wood, in which, after wandering about for a whole day, he could not find a way out. When evening came on, he climbed up a high tree to be out of reach of the wild beasts, and about midnight thought he saw the glimmer of a small light in the distance; he looked cautiously through the foliage to see where it was. But he first took off his hat and threw it in the direction of the light, so that when he came down from the tree it might show him which way to turn. Then he scrambled down, went to where his hat lay, picked it up, and, placing it on his head, turned his steps towards the light.

The nearer he approached, the larger the light appeared, till at length he saw an immense fire with an ox roasting on a spit, and three giants sitting round it. As he drew near, he heard one of the giants say, 'I must just see if this meat is ready for eating.'

So he cut off a piece, and was just going to put it into his mouth, when the hunter shot it out of his hand. 'Now then,' cried the giant, 'the wind has blown that piece away, I must have another.'

But before he could get even a bite this also was shot away. The giant in a rage turned to the one who sat next to him, and, boxing his ears, cried: 'What did you snatch that piece away for?'

'I didn't snatch it away,' said the other; 'it must have been some sharpshooter on the road.'

The giant cut off a third piece, but it was scarcely in his hand before the hunter shot it out again. 'That must be a

good shot, whoever he is,' said the giants one to another, 'to shoot pieces out of one's mouth in that way; he might be useful to us.'

So they called aloud, 'Come here, you sharpshooter; come and sit down by our fire with us, and have some supper; we will do you no harm. If you won't come, we will fetch you by force, and then good-bye to you.'

The youth, on this, stepped forward and said: 'I am a trained hunter, and wherever I aim with my gun I am sure to hit.'

So they asked him to join them, and said he should have the best of everything they had. They told him also that not far from where they sat was a large piece of water, and beyond it stood a castle, in which lived a beautiful princess, whom they wished to carry off. 'Oh, that is easily managed,' he replied. But they said again, 'It is not so very easy, for the princess has a sharp little dog, which begins to bark loudly when anyone approaches the tower in which she sleeps, and the moment he barks everyone in the royal household wakes, and we cannot therefore get in. Do you think you could undertake to shoot that dog?'

'Oh yes,' he replied; 'that would be to me a mere trifle.'

He went down to the water and seated himself in a boat, and was soon across. As he approached the shore, out ran the little dog, but before he could utter a single bark, the hunter with his air-gun shot him dead. When the giants saw this they were mightily pleased, and thought now they were certain to have the princess; but the hunter wished to see first how the affair was to be managed, so he told them to remain outside till he called them.

Then he entered the castle alone and found everything still as a mouse, for they all slept. In the first room he entered there hung upon the wall a sword of pure silver with a golden star upon it, in which was inscribed the king's name.

On a table near lay a sealed letter; the hunter took it up, broke open the seal, and read that whoever wielded that sword could take the life of anyone who came in his way.

He took the sword from the wall, fastened it on, and went farther. Presently he came to the chamber where the princess lay sleeping, and she was so beautiful that he stood still and held his breath as he looked at her. 'Ah,' thought he to himself, 'I dare not allow this innocent maiden to fall into the power of those wild giants, who have wickedness in their thoughts.'

Then he looked round the room, and saw a pair of slippers; on the right slipper was embroidered a star, with the king's name, and on the left another star with the princess's name. There was also a silk neckerchief, embroidered with gold, on which her father's and her own name were worked, and all in gold letters. The hunter took a pair of scissors, and cut a strip off the silk neckerchief, and put it in his knapsack; he also took the slipper with the king's name on it, and placed it with the strip of silk. And all this while the princess slept peacefully, and she did not even wake while he cut a piece from the sleeve of her nightdress, which he also placed in his bag, and went away without disturbing anyone.

Outside the door he found the three giants waiting impatiently, and wondering that he did not bring the princess. He called to them, however, to come in. 'One at a time,' he said, 'for I cannot open the door for you, but there is a hole through which you can creep.'

Then the first giant came near, and in an instant the hunter seized him by the hair, dragged the head through, cut it off with the silver sword at one blow, and pulled the rest of the giant's body in after it. He then called up the second and third, and served them exactly in the same manner, and then, feeling joyful at having freed the beautiful young maiden from such enemies, he left the castle.

'Ah,' thought he, 'I will now go home and tell my father

what I have already done, and afterwards go out again into the world, to see what other good fortune awaits me.'

On arising in the morning and going to the door of the castle, the king saw with surprise the three dead giants. He instantly went to his daughter's room, woke her, and asked her if she knew who had killed the giants.

'Dear father,' she replied, 'indeed I do not know; I have slept all night.'

However, when she got up and began to dress, she first missed her right slipper, then she noticed that a strip had been cut off her silk necktie, and at last that her nightdress sleeve had a piece cut off.

On hearing of this, the king called together the whole household, soldiers, servants, and all who were there, and inquired if they knew who had destroyed the giants and delivered his daughter from their power. Now, the captain of the soldiers was a wicked and ugly man, with one eye, and he came forward and said he had done it.

'Then,' said the king, 'as you have accomplished this, I will give you my daughter in marriage.'

But the maiden said: 'Dear father, why should I be married? I would rather go out in the world and travel about on foot till I could walk no farther, than marry that man.'

The king replied: 'If you will not be married as I wish, you shall take off all your royal robes, and put on peasant's clothes, and I shall send you to a potter to learn how to be useful in selling earthenware vessels.'

Then the princess took off her beautiful clothes, dressed herself as a peasant, and went to a potter, and hired of him a basket of earthenware goods, and promised him that if she had sold any by the evening she would pay him for the hire. Her father, however, made her go and stand in a corner of the market-place to sell her goods, and he ordered some peasants to drive their carts over them, so that her goods would be broken into a thousand pieces.

The poor maiden took her basket to the corner, as the king had desired her to do. The waggons drove by, and smashed her goods to atoms. Then she began to weep and cry: 'Oh, how shall I pay the potter?'

The king, however, who still wanted her to marry the captain, sent for the potter, and asked him not to lend her another basket of goods, and so when she went to him the next morning, he refused to let her have any more. Then she went to her father weeping and lamenting sadly, and declaring that she would go out into the world and wander about by herself, rather than be married to the captain. Her father then told her that he would have a small cottage built for her in the wood, where she could live all her life by herself, and cook for anyone who passed by, but receive no money for it.

As soon as the house was finished, a sign was hung up over the door, on which was written: 'For nothing to-day, to-morrow we pay.' She lived in this cottage for a long time, and it was soon noised abroad in the world that a maiden lived there who cooked for nothing, and that over the door of her cottage hung a sign. The hunter who had killed the giants heard of this, and thought to himself: 'That is the very place for me to have my dinner cooked; I am hungry, and have not much money.'

So he took his air-gun and his knapsack, wherein everything still remained which he had taken from the castle as proofs of what he had done, and, going to the forest, soon found the tiny house and read the words upon the sign, 'For nothing to-day, to-morrow we pay.' He carried also the sword with which he had cut off the heads of the three giants. So he went in like a traveller, and asked for something to eat.

He was delighted with the beautiful maiden there; for she was as beautiful as a picture. She asked him where he came from, and he replied that he was travelling about the world. She asked him where he had got the sword with her father's name on it, and in reply he asked her if she was the king's daughter, and she answered, 'Yes.'

'With this sword,' he said, 'I cut off the giants' heads. And here,' he continued, opening his knapsack, 'is the slipper, and the pieces of the silk neckerchief and the nightdress. I have also the tongues of the giants, which I cut out after they were dead; so that I have every proof.'

Then how happy she was; for she knew that he had been the one to set her free. After this they went together to the old king; and the princess led her father away to her chamber, and told him that this was the man who had slain the giants. When they showed him the proofs, the king could no longer doubt, and told the hunter it was a great pleasure to him to know how it all happened, and that he would give him his daughter as a wife.

The princess heard this, and was happy. Thereupon the hunter was presented with a dress, and the king gave orders for a grand entertainment. The hunter was placed at the right hand of the princess. On her left sat the captain, who supposed the huntsman to be only a visitor.

After dinner the king told the captain he wished to ask him a question. 'If anyone should assert that he had killed three giants,' said the king, 'and on examining the heads they were found to be without tongues, how could you account for it?'

'Perhaps they had no tongues,' replied the captain.

'That is an impossibility,' said the king. 'Every creature has a tongue.' And he continued, 'What should be done to the man who claims an unmerited honour and reward?'

'He deserves to be torn in pieces,' was the reply.

'You have pronounced your own sentence,' replied the king. 'Here is the man who killed the giants, and cut out their tongues, which he has, with other proofs, in his possession.'

So the captain was made a prisoner, and led away to punishment, and the hunter married the young princess. He soon after sent for his father and mother, and they lived with their son in great happiness till the king's death, and then he became king.

THE FLAIL FROM HEAVEN.

A PEASANT once went out with a pair of oxen to plough. As soon as they were in the fields, the horns of the two animals began to grow, and kept on growing all day, till by the time they returned home they had grown too large to get in at the stable-door. Luckily, a butcher came by, to whom the oxen were soon made over, and the bargain settled in this manner. The peasant agreed to carry to the butcher a quart of rape-seed, and for every seed the butcher promised to pay a dollar.

The peasant went home, and very soon returned with the rape-seed for the butcher, but on the way he dropped one seed. The butcher counted the seeds, and paid for them justly; but if the peasant had not lost that one seed he would have had another dollar. However, he set out to return home quite satisfied, but on reaching the place where the seed had dropped, what was his surprise to find that it had taken root and grown into a tree, the top of which reached to heaven!

Then thought the peasant: 'I should like to have a peep at what they are about up there, and see what the angels are doing, and here is a splendid opportunity.'

So he climbed up the tree, and, peeping in, saw the angels at work threshing oats, and stood watching them for some time.

Presently, as he stood there, he felt the tree on which he stood totter under him. He looked through the branches, and saw that they were cutting it down. 'If I should fall from such a height as this, it would be terrible,' he thought; and in his trouble he scarcely knew what to do.

There seemed, however, nothing better than to take a piece of cord which lay near the heaps of chaff, and let himself down by it. But before he did so he laid hold of a hatchet and a flail which the angels had left behind them, and, tying them both to the rope, slid gently down from the tree.

When he reached the earth, however, he sank into a hole so deep that it was fortunate he had a hatchet with him, for with it he was able to cut steps in the side of the hole, and climb once more into daylight.

He took the hatchet and the flail with him, that no one might doubt his story.

THE TWO KINGS' CHILDREN.

THERE was once a king who had a little boy, of whom there was a prophecy that he should be killed by a stag when he was sixteen years old. When he had gained that age he went out with the huntsmen hunting. In the forest the prince was separated from the others, and suddenly saw a great stag, which he wished to shoot, but could not hit. He chased the stag so long that they were both quite out of the wood, when, instead of the stag, there stood all at once before him a very tall man, who said: 'Now, it is well that I have you. I have already worn out six pairs of skates in hunting you, and have not been able to get you.'

Then he took the king's son with him, and dragged him through a great lake to a large royal castle, and then made him sit down and eat with him. After they had taken food, the king said: 'I have three daughters. You must watch with the eldest for one night, from nine o'clock in the evening till six o'clock in the morning. I will come every hour as the clock strikes, and call you, and if you give me no answer, you shall be killed the next morning; if you answer, you shall have her for your wife.'

When the young people went to the bedroom, there stood in it a stone image of St. Christopher, and the king's daughter said to it: 'At nine o'clock my father will come, and every

hour after until it strikes three. When he calls, give him an answer instead of the prince.'

The stone St. Christopher nodded its head quite quickly, and then slower and slower until it stood still.

The next morning the king said to him: 'You have done this task well, but I cannot give you my daughter; you must watch a night with my second daughter, then I will consider if you can have my eldest daughter for your wife. But I shall come every hour myself; when I call, answer me, and if, when I call, you do not answer me, your blood shall flow.'

Then the prince and princess both went into the sleeping-room, and there stood a still larger stone image of St. Christopher.

The king's daughter said to it, 'If my father calls, do you answer him.'

Then the great stone image of St. Christopher again nodded its head quickly, and then more and more slowly, till it stood still again.

And the prince lay down on the threshold, put his hand under his head, and fell asleep. The next morning the king said to him: 'You have done this task really well, but I cannot give you my daughter. You must watch a night with my youngest daughter, then I will consider if I can give you my second daughter to wife. But I shall come every hour, and when I call, answer me; and if you do not answer, your blood shall flow.'

Then the prince and princess went again together to the bedroom, where was a much larger and much fatter St. Christopher than the two first had been.

To it the king's daughter said: 'When my father calls, do you answer.'

The great tall stone St. Christopher nodded his head for half an hour, until at length the head stood still.

Then the prince lay down on the threshold and fell asleep.

The next morning the king said: 'You have truly watched

well, but I cannot give you my daughter yet. If you can cut down my great forest and make a lake for me there between six in the morning and six in the evening I will think of it.'

Then he gave him a glass axe, a glass wedge, and a glass mallet.

When the prince came into the wood he began to cut, but the axe broke in two; then he took the wedge and struck it once with the mallet, and it became as short and as small as sand. Then he was much troubled, and thought he would have to die, so he sat down and wept.

Now, when it was mid-day, the king said, 'One of you girls must take him something to eat.'

The two eldest refused, and the youngest had to go and take him something. When she came into the forest she asked him how he was getting on. 'Oh,' said he, 'I am getting on very badly.' Then she told him to come and eat a little. 'No,' he said, 'I cannot; I shall have to die, so I will not eat any more.' But she spoke kindly to him, and begged him to try, till he came and ate. When he had eaten, she said, 'I will comb your hair a little, and then you will feel brighter.' So she combed his hair, and he fell asleep. Then she took her handkerchief, made a knot in it, and struck with the knot three times on the ground, and said, 'Earth-workers, come forth.' At once a great many little earth-workers came, and asked what she required. She said, 'In three hours the forest must be cut down, and the site of it must be a lake, that one may be able to see one's self in, as in a glass, and fish must be in it.' The earth-workers went and brought together their relations to help, and in two hours it was done. Then they came to the king's daughter, and said, 'We have done as we were commanded.' She took her white handkerchief again and struck three times on the earth, and said, 'Earth-workers, go home;' and they all disappeared.

When the prince awoke it was all done, and the princess said, 'Come home when it has struck six.' Then she went home.

When he returned home the king asked, 'Have you levelled the forest?'

'Yes,' said the prince.

'That is well.' But as they were sitting at table, the king said, 'You have done your task, but I cannot give you my daughter yet; you must do something more.'

'What is it?' asked the prince. The king said that there was a great mountain, and on it were thousands of bushes, which he must cut down, and on the top build a great castle that must be finer than man can think, and all the furniture that belongs to a castle must be in it.

When he rose the next morning, the king gave him a glass axe and a glass gimlet, and said that he was to have his task done by six o'clock. When he chopped at the first thorn-bush the axe broke off quite short, and so small that the pieces flew all around, and the gimlet also he could not use. Then he was quite miserable, and waited for his dearest, in case she would come and help him. When it was mid-day she came, and brought him something to eat. He went to meet her and told her everything, and then let her comb his hair, and he slept. Then she once more made a knot and struck the earth, and said, 'Earth-workers, come forth.' Many earth-workers appeared, and asked what she required. She replied, 'In the space of three hours all the bushes must be cut down, and on the top of the mountain must stand a castle, which must be as beautiful as can be imagined, and all the furniture must be therein.'

The earth-workers went and fetched their relations to help them, and when the time was up all was done. Then they came to the princess and told her, and she took her handkerchief and struck the knot thrice on the earth, and said, 'Earth-workers, go home;' and they all disappeared.

Then the prince awoke and saw everything, and he was as happy as a bird in the air. When it struck six they went together home. Then the king said, 'Is the castle ready?'

'Yes,' replied the prince; but while they sat at table the king said, 'I cannot give you my youngest daughter till the two eldest are married.'

Then the prince and princess were very sad, and the prince did not know what to do. So he came at night to the princess, and ran away with her. When they had gone a little distance the king's daughter looked back and saw her father behind her. 'Oh,' said she, 'what shall we do! My father is behind us and will take us back. I will change you



THE CASTLE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

into a briar, and myself into a rose, and I will shelter myself in the midst of the bush.'

When the father came to the spot there stood a briar with one rose on it; he was going to gather the rose, but the thorns pricked his fingers so that he had to go home. His wife asked why he had not brought his daughter back with him. He said that he was close to them, but all at once he lost sight of them, and where they had stood was a briar with a rose growing on it.

Then said the queen: 'If you had broken off the rose the briar must have come also.'

So he went back to fetch the rose; but meantime the pair were already far over the fields, and the king ran after them.

When the daughter looked round and saw him coming, she said: 'Oh, what must I do? I will make you into a church, and myself into a pastor, and I will stand in the pulpit and preach.'

When the king came to the place there stood a church, and in the pulpit a pastor was preaching, so he listened to the sermon and then went home. The queen asked him why he had not brought them.

He answered: 'I ran so long after them that I should soon have been with them, when a church stood there, and in the pulpit a parson who preached.'

'You should have brought the parson, and the church would have come also. It is of no use to send you; I must go myself.'

When the queen had gone some distance she saw them both from afar. But the daughter looked back and saw her mother coming, and said: 'How unfortunate! my mother is coming herself. I will change you into a pond, and myself into a fish.'

When the mother came to the spot there was a great pool, and in the middle of it a fish sprang around, and peeped with his head above the water, and was quite gay. The queen wanted to catch the fish, but she could not. Then she was angry, and drank up the whole pool that she might get the fish; but it made her so ill that she was obliged to bring up the pool again. Then she cried, 'I see well that I can do nothing now;' and she said that they might come back to her. Then they went back together, and the queen gave her daughter three walnuts, and said, 'These can help you when you are in the greatest need.' So the young people went away again together, and when they had gone quite ten miles they arrived at the castle from which the prince came, and close by it was a village.

When they reached it the prince said: 'Stay here, my

dearest; I will go up first to the castle, and then I will come and fetch you with the carriage and servants.'

When he arrived at the castle they were all rejoiced at having the king's son back again, and he then told them that he had a bride, who was in the village, and that he wished them to go with the carriage and fetch her. They at once harnessed the horses, and many attendants mounted on the carriage. When the king's son was about to get in, his mother gave him a kiss, and he forgot all that had happened, and also what he was just going to do. Then his mother ordered the horses to be taken out of the carriage, and everyone went back to the house.

But the maiden sat in the village, and watched and watched, and thought he would fetch her, but no one came. Then the king's daughter took service at the mill which belonged to the castle, and was obliged every day to sit by the water and clean the dishes.

The queen came one day from the castle, and was walking by the water, when she saw the fine-looking maiden sitting there, and said: 'What a fine girl that is! She pleases me well.' Then she and all who were with her looked at the maiden, but nobody knew her.

A long time passed by, during which she served the miller honourably and faithfully. Meanwhile, the queen had been seeking a wife for her son, who came from a far-off part of the world. When the bride arrived they were at once to be married, and many people came running together who wished to see everything.

Then the maiden said to the miller that she would like to go also, and the miller said, 'Yes, go, then.' When she was about to go she opened one of the three walnuts, and there lay in it a beautiful dress. She put it on, and went into the church and stood by the altar.

Suddenly the bride and bridegroom came and placed themselves before it, and when the pastor was going to marry them

the bride looked sideways and saw the maiden standing there. Then she stood up again and said that she would not be given away until she had as fine a dress as the lady there. So they went home again, and sent to ask the lady if she would sell the dress. No, she would not sell it, but the bride might perhaps earn it.

Then the bride asked her what she should do. She replied that if she might sleep one night before the door of the prince the bride might have it. So the bride said, yes, she might do so. But she commanded the servants of the prince to give him a sleeping-draught. The maiden lay on the threshold and lamented all night long. She had had the forest cut down; she had had the fish-pond made; she had had the castle built for him; she had changed him into a briar, then into a church, and at last into a pond, and yet he had forgotten her so soon.

The prince heard nothing of all this, but the servants had been awakened, had listened to it, and did not know what it meant. The next morning, when they were all up, the bride put on the dress, and went with the bridegroom to the church. Then the handsome maiden opened the second walnut, and there was a still more beautiful dress inside it, which she put on and went again to the church, and stood by the altar, and everything happened as it had happened the time before. The maiden lay again all night on the threshold of the prince's room, and the servant was ordered to give him a sleeping-draught again. The servant, however, gave him something to keep him awake, and when he lay on his bed the miller's maiden lamented as before, and told all that she had done. The prince heard it all and was much troubled, for he remembered all that had happened; then he wanted to go to her, but his mother had locked the door. The next morning, however, he went straight to his dearest and told her all that had happened to him, and prayed her not to be angry that he had forgotten her so long. Then the princess opened the third walnut, and there was in it a still more splendid dress; that

she put on, and went with the bridegroom to the church, and numbers of children gave them flowers and offered them gay ribbons to bind about their feet, and the priest blessed them, and they had a happy wedding. The false mother and bride had to depart. The mouth of him who told this last is still warm.

THE BRIGHT SUN BRINGS IT TO LIGHT.

A TAILOR'S apprentice was travelling about the world seeking for work, but he could not find any, and his poverty was so great that he had not a farthing. One day he met a Jew, and as he thought that he would have much money about him, the tailor put God out of his mind, attacked the Jew, and said, 'Give me money, or I will kill you.'

The Jew said: 'Spare my life; I have no money except eight farthings.'

The tailor, however, said: 'You have money, and you must produce it;' and he used violence, and struck the Jew so heavily that he was nearly dead. As he was dying his last words were, 'The bright sun will bring it to light.' Then he died. The tailor's apprentice searched his pockets, seeking for money, but found no more than the eight farthings which the Jew had said he had. Then he lifted him up, carried him behind a clump of trees, and went on again to seek work.

After travelling for a long time he got employment in a town with a master who had a beautiful daughter, with whom he fell in love. He married her and lived happily. After a long time, when they had two children, the wife's father and mother died, and the young people kept house alone. One morning, as the man sat at the table before the window, his wife brought him some coffee, and when he had poured it into

the saucer, and was about to drink it, the sun shone on it, and the reflection gleamed hither and thither on the wall and made circles. The tailor looked up, and said, 'He would gladly bring it to light, but cannot.'

The woman said : 'Dear man, what was it? What do you mean by that?'

He answered : 'I must not tell.'

But she said : 'If you love me you must tell me,' and used the most loving words, saying that she would tell no one, and left him no rest.

Then he told her how long years ago, when he was quite worn out and without money, he had killed a Jew, and that the Jew had said, in his death agony, 'The bright sun will bring it to light.' And now the sun wanted to bring it to light, but was not able. Then he ordered her particularly not to tell anyone, or he would lose his life, and she promised him. But when he had sat down to work she went to her god-mother and told her the story, begging her never to mention it to anyone; but before three days were past the whole town knew it, and the tailor was brought to trial and condemned. Thus the bright sun did bring it to light.

THE BLUE LIGHT.

THERE once lived a soldier who had served the king faithfully for many years; but when the war ceased, and the soldier, who had many wounds, was disabled, the king said to him, 'You can go home now, I do not want you any more; you have had all your pay, and only those can receive wages who serve me for them.'

The soldier knew not how he should get his living, and he

wandered about for a whole day, full of care, until at evening he entered a wood, and as soon as it grew quite dark he saw at a distance a light, and on going towards it he found a house in which dwelt an old witch. 'Give me a night's lodging,' he said to her, 'and something to eat and drink; I am almost starved.'

'Ah!' she cried, 'who ever gives anything to a runaway soldier? But I will take pity on you if you will do as I wish.'

'What do you want me to do?' asked the soldier.

'First I want you to dig my garden.'

To this the soldier readily agreed, and worked all the following day as hard as he could; but though he exerted all his strength, it was not finished by the evening.

'Ah, I see plainly,' said the witch, 'that you cannot do any more to-day; well, I will give you another night's lodging, and to-morrow you shall split up a cartload of wood into firewood.'

Next day the soldier worked hard at wood-cutting till evening, and then the witch again proposed that he should remain the night. 'You shall do one more little task for me,' she said; 'behind my house is an old empty well, into which my light has fallen; it burns blue, and will not go out, and you shall go down and fetch it up for me.'

The next day the old woman took him to the well, and let him down in a basket. He soon found the blue light, and made signs to her to pull him up again. She drew him up and he was near the brink, and stretched out her hand to take the light from him.

'No,' said he, perceiving her wicked intentions; 'I do not give up the light till I am standing with both feet on the ground.'

On this the witch flew into a rage, let him fall back again into the well, and went away. The poor soldier fell, without taking any harm, on the moist ground of the well; the blue light was still burning, but how could that help him? He saw

plainly that death must come to him at last, and he sat for a while feeling quite sorrowful. By chance he put his hand in his pocket and found his tobacco pipe half full of tobacco. 'That shall be my last comfort,' thought he; and, taking it out, he lighted it at the blue light, and began to smoke.

The smoke had no sooner ascended in the air than he saw standing before him a little dark man, who said, 'Master, what is your pleasure?'

'What commands have I to give thee?' answered the soldier, in wonder.

'I must do all that you bid me,' he replied.

'Good,' said the soldier; 'then first help me out of this well.'

The little man took him by the hand and led him through an underground passage, but he did not forget to take the blue light with him. Then he showed him the hidden treasures which the witch had collected together and concealed underground, and the soldier took away as much gold as he could carry. As soon as they were above ground again he said to the little man, 'Now go in and bind the witch, and carry her before the judge.'

Not long after out she came, riding swift as the wind on a wild cat, and screaming frightfully. In a very short time, however, the little man returned, and said, 'It is all right, and the witch is already hanging on the gallows. Now, master, what is your pleasure?'

'At this moment nothing,' replied the soldier; 'you can go home, but be at hand to answer when I call you.'

'It is not necessary to call me,' he said; 'you have only to light your pipe at the blue light and I shall immediately stand before you.' Then he vanished from his eyes.

The soldier went back into the town from which he had wandered. He took up his abode at the best inn, ordered new clothes, and desired the landlord to have a room furnished for him as elegantly as possible.

When it was ready, and he had taken possession of it, he summoned the little man, and said to him, 'I have served the king faithfully for many years, but he sent me away and left me to starve, therefore now I will have my revenge.'

'What am I to do?' asked the mannikin.

'Late in the evening,' he replied, 'when the princess is in bed and asleep, fetch her from the castle and bring her here; she shall be my maid-servant.'

Then said the little man, 'For me this is a very trifling task, and I will do it; but for you it is a very dangerous thing to do, for if it should be found out you will suffer for it.'

As the clock struck twelve the door sprang open, and the little man appeared, carrying the king's daughter. 'Aha! there you are,' cried the soldier, 'fresh to your work; go and fetch the broom and sweep the floor.' When this was finished he called her to his chair, stretched out his foot towards her, and said, 'Pull off my boot.' When she had done so he threw it in her face, and told her to pick it up and clean and polish it. She did all that he told her without resistance, meekly, and with half-closed eyes. At the first cockcrow the little man carried her back to the castle, and placed her again in her bed.

The next morning, when she rose, she went to her father and told him she had had such a wonderful dream! She said she had dreamed that she was carried through the streets as quick as lightning to a room in which was a soldier, who made her wait upon him, and do all kinds of menial work, such as sweeping the room and cleaning his boots. 'It was only a dream,' she said, 'and yet I feel as tired as if I had really done it all.'

'The dream could not possibly have been true,' said the king; 'however, to make sure, I will advise you what to do. Fill your pocket full of peas, and make a little hole in it, so that, if you are really carried away in the night, they will fall out and leave a trace behind you in the street.'

While the king spoke, the little man, who was invisible, stood by him, and heard all he said.

That night, when he carried the sleeping princess through the streets, the peas fell out of her pocket; but they left no trace, for the cunning little man had strewed peas beforehand in all the streets. And she was obliged, therefore, again to be servant to the soldier till the cock crowed.

The following morning the king sent his servants out to find the track; but it was quite impossible, for the streets were crowded with poor children gathering up cans full of peas, and saying: 'It has been raining peas all night!'

'We must think of something else,' said the king. 'You had better keep on your shoes when you go to bed, and before you come back, if you are carried away, leave one of them behind wherever you are, then I am sure to find it.'

The little man heard of the king's plan, and in the evening, when the soldier desired him to fetch the princess, he advised him not to do so again.

'Against this there is no way to avoid discovery,' he said, 'and if the shoe is found here the king can do you great injury.'

'Do as I tell you!' cried the soldier; and so the princess was for the third night brought to work as a servant-maid.

Before she was carried back, however, she took off her shoe, and placed it under the soldier's bed.

The next morning the king ordered search to be made all over the town for his daughter's shoe, and it was found in the soldier's room. The soldier, who had at the request of the little man opened the door, was seized and carried off to prison. In his fright he forgot to take with him his best and most valuable possessions, the blue light and the gold, and he had, therefore, only a ducat in his pocket. As he stood loaded with chains at the window of his prison, he saw one of his old comrades pass by, and he tapped on the window-pane, and beckoned him over.

When the man came nearer, he said to him: 'Will you be so kind as to fetch for me a little parcel that I have left at the inn, and I will give you a ducat for your trouble?'

Away ran his comrade, and fetched him what he wanted.

As soon as the soldier was again alone, he took out his pipe, lit it, and began to smoke, and immediately the little man stood before him.

'Do not be afraid,' said he to his master; 'go with them wherever they lead you. Let what will happen, only remember to take your blue light and your pipe with you.'

The next day the trial of the soldier took place, and, although he had really done nothing very wicked, he was sentenced to death.

As he was being led away, he begged the king to grant him one last favour.

'What is it?' asked the king.

'That I may smoke one pipe on my road,' he replied.

'You may smoke three if you like,' said the king; 'but do not suppose I shall grant you your life.'

The soldier, on this, took out his pipe, lit it, and began to smoke; and, as a pair of rings of smoke ascended in the air, the little man appeared with a little cudgel in his hand, and said 'What is my master's pleasure?'

'Knock down the false judges and their abettors to the ground,' said the soldier, 'and do not spare the king for treating me so shamefully!'

Away flew the little man like lightning, striking right and left, here and there, and so scaring them that, if the cudgel merely touched them, they fell to the ground and remained there, not daring to move.

The king was terribly alarmed, and at last obliged to beg for his life. His prayer was not granted till he had promised to give his kingdom to the soldier, and his daughter to be his wife.

THE OLD WOMAN IN THE WOOD.

A POOR servant-maid was once travelling through a wood with her master and mistress, when they were attacked by robbers, who came out of the thicket and murdered all that passed that way. None of the party escaped, excepting the maid-servant, who had sprung aside, and hidden herself behind a tree.

As soon as the robbers had made off with their booty, she ventured out of her hiding-place, and saw what dreadful trouble had happened. Then she began to weep bitterly, and said: 'What shall I, a poor maiden, do now? I know not how to find my way out of the wood, for not a living creature dwells here, and I shall certainly be starved to death.'

She tried to find a way out of the wood, however, but without success. At evening she seated herself under a tree, and determined to remain there, whatever might happen, without attempting to go away, and trust in Heaven to help her.

After she had been sitting there a short time, a white dove flew down from the tree, and he carried in his beak a little golden key. This golden key he placed in the hand of the maiden, and said: 'Do you see yonder a large tree? On it is a little lock, which can be opened with that key. If you open it, you will find plenty to eat and drink, and will suffer no more hunger.'

She went to the tree, unlocked it, and found to her surprise a basin full of white bread-and-milk, so that she could eat and be satisfied. When she had finished, she said to herself: 'This is the time for the chickens to go home to roost; I am so tired, I wish I had a bed to lie on.'

Again the white dove flew down, and brought another key, and said: 'Unlock the tree with this, and you will find a bed.'

She did as she was told, and there she found a pretty little

white bed, and, praying to Heaven to watch over her during the night, she laid herself down and slept.

In the morning came the dove the third time, and brought her another little key, and said: 'Unlock the tree again, and you will find clothes.' And when she did so, there she saw beautiful dresses embroidered with gold and precious stones, such as none but a king's daughter could wear.

She remained after this for a long time in the wood, and the dove came every day and took care of her. She was poor, but it was a peaceable and happy life.

At last the dove came one day, and said to her: 'Will you do something for me, only for love?'

'With all my heart,' she replied.

Then said the dove: 'I will take you to a small cottage. Go in. Inside it sits an old woman. She will say "Good-day" to you; for your life give her no reply, let her do what she may, but turn away to the right, and you will see a door, which you must open, and in the room on a table lies a heap of rings of all sorts and descriptions, some of them set with beautiful and glittering precious stones. But leave all these alone, and look only for a plain gold ring which must be among them, and bring it to me as quickly as you can.'

The maiden went to the house, and stepped in.

There sat the old woman, and said: 'Good-day, my child! But she gave no reply, and went on to the other door. 'Where are you going?' cried the old woman. 'This is my house—no one can enter there without my permission;' and she seized her by the dress, and tried to hold her fast. But the maiden kept silent, freed herself from the old woman's grasp, and went right into the room.

There on the table lay an immense number of rings that shone and glittered before her eyes; but she threw them on one side, and searched for the plain one, which, however, she could not find.

While she was searching, she happened to look up, and saw

the old woman slipping away with a bird-cage in her hand. The maiden followed her out quickly, took the cage from her, and, as she opened it, and looked inside, there was a bird with the plain ring in its beak.

She took the ring, and went away full of joy from the house, and was soon back to the tree, where she expected to see the white dove waiting for her; for she expected him to fetch the ring, but he did not come. While she waited, she leaned against the tree, and, as she so stood, she felt that the tree became soft and flexible, and the branches sank down.

All at once two of the branches wound themselves round her, and they were the arms of a human being; and, as she looked up, she saw that the tree had changed to a handsome man, who kissed her, and said: 'You have broken the spell, and delivered me from the power of the old woman, who is a wicked witch. She changed me into a tree, and every day for two hours I was a white dove; but so long as she kept the ring I could not recover my human form.'

At the same time the horses and servants were set free from the witchcraft, for they also had been changed into trees, and stood near their master.

Then they all travelled away to his kingdom, for he was a king's son, and they married and lived happily.

FERDINAND FAITHFUL AND FERDINAND UNFAITHFUL.

THERE once lived a man and his wife who, as long as they were rich, had no children, but as soon as they were poor they had a little boy. They could, however, find no godfather for

him; so the man said he would go to another place and see if he could get one.

As he was walking, a poor man met him, who asked him where he was going. He said that he was going to see if he could get a godfather; that he was poor, so no one would stand godfather for him.

'Oh,' said the poor man, 'I am poor, and you are poor. I will be godfather for you; but I am so poor that I cannot give anything to the child. Go home and tell the nurse she is to come to the church with the infant.'

When they came together to the church, the beggar was already there, and he gave the child the name of Ferdinand Faithful.

As they came out of church the beggar said: 'Now go home. I cannot give you anything, and you should not give me anything.'

He, however, gave a key to the nurse, and told her that she might give it to the father when they got home, and tell him to keep it till the child was fourteen years old; then he should go on the heath, where there was a castle that the key would fit, and that all that was in it should be his.

When the child was seven years old, and had grown strong, he went to play with some other boys, who each of them boasted that he had got more from his godfather than the other; but the child could say nothing, and was troubled, and went home and said to his father: 'Did I get nothing from my godfather?'

'Oh yes,' said the father; 'you have a key, and if there stands a castle on the heath, go to it and open it.'

The boy went, but there was no castle to be seen.

After seven years more, when he was fourteen years old, he went thither again, and there stood the castle. When he had opened it there was nothing within but a horse—a white horse.

Then the boy was so full of joy because he had a horse, that he mounted it and rode back to his father.

'Now I have a fine white horse I will travel,' said he.

So he started, and as he was on the road there lay in his path a pen. He was going to pick it up, but then he thought that he would let it lie, as he would easily find a pen where he was going if he wanted one.

As he was riding away, a voice called after him: 'Ferdinand the Faithful, take it with you.'

He looked around, but saw no one. However, he went and picked it up.

After he had ridden a little farther, he came to some water, and a fish was lying on the shore, panting for breath; so he said: 'Wait, my little fish; I will help you to get into the water;' and he took hold of it by the tail and threw it into the lake.

Then the fish lifted his head out of the water, and said: 'As you have helped me out of the mud, I will give you a flute; if you are in any need, play on it, and I will help you; and if you ever let anything fall into the water, play on it, and I will fetch it out.'

Then he rode away, and there came a man who asked where he was going.

'Oh, to the nearest place.'

'What is your name?'

'Ferdinand the Faithful.'

'Then we have nearly the same name, for I am Ferdinand the Unfaithful.'

And they went together to the inn of the next town.

Now, it was unlucky that Ferdinand the Unfaithful knew everything the other thought or was going to do; he knew this by means of all kinds of wicked arts.

There was in the inn an honest girl, who had a bright face and behaved well; she fell in love with Ferdinand the Faithful, for he was a handsome man, and she asked him where he was going.

'I am going to travel about,' he answered.

Then she said he ought to stay there, for the king of that country wanted a servant or outrider, and he might enter the royal service.

He answered that he could not go and ask for the place.

Then said the maid: 'I will do it for you;' and she went straight to the king, and said that she knew of a handsome servant for him.

He was well pleased and had Ferdinand brought to him, and wished to make him his servant. He, however, would rather be an outrider, for where his horse was there he would always be; so the king made him an outrider.

When Ferdinand the Unfaithful heard of it, he said to the girl: 'What! do you help him and not me?'

'Oh,' said the girl, 'I will also help you.' She thought: 'I must keep friends with him, for he is not to be trusted.'

She went to the king and offered him as a servant, and the king was willing to take him.

Now, when the king met his lords in the morning, he complained: 'Oh, if I only had my sweetheart with me!'

Ferdinand the Unfaithful was always hostile to Ferdinand the Faithful, so once, when the king complained, he said: 'You have the outrider, send him; he must find her, and if he does not, his head should be taken off.'

Then the king ordered Ferdinand the Faithful to come to him, and told him that there was in some place or other a lady he loved, that Ferdinand must bring her to him; if he did not do so, he must die.

Then Ferdinand the Faithful went into the stable to his white horse, and groaned and moaned.

'Oh, what an unlucky man am I!'

Then someone behind him cried: 'Ferdinand the Faithful, why weepest thou?'

He looked round, but saw no one, and he continued complaining: 'My dear little white horse, you will be forsaken, for I must die!'

Then there came a voice again : 'Ferdinand the Faithful, why weepst thou ?'

And he became aware that it was his horse that asked the question.

'Is that you, my little horse ? Can you speak ?' And he went on : 'I am to go to this place and to that, and am to bring the bride. Do you know how I should begin ?'

The horse answered : 'Go to the king, and say that if he will give you all you want you will get her for him. If he gives you a ship full of meat and a ship full of bread you will succeed ; for there are great giants on the water who will tear you to pieces if you do not bring them meat, and there are great birds who will peck out your eyes if you have no bread for them.'

Then the king ordered the butchers to kill and the bakers to bake, so that the ships might be full.

When they were filled, the horse said to Ferdinand the Faithful : 'Now get on me, and go with me into the ship, and when the giants come, say :

"Still, still, my dear little giants !
For of you I have thought,
And some meat have I brought."

And when the birds come, say again :

"Still, still, my dear little birds !
For of you have I thought,
And some bread have I brought."

Then they will do nothing to you, and when you come to the castle the giants will help you. There the princess is lying asleep ; you must not awake her. The giants will take her up in the bed, and carry her into the ship.'

And it all happened as the white horse had said, and Ferdinand the Faithful gave the giants and the birds what he had brought for them ; therefore the giants were willing to help him, and carried the princess in the bed to the king.

When she came to the king, she said that she could not live—she must have her writings which were left in the castle.

Then, by the persuasion of Ferdinand the Unfaithful, Ferdinand the Faithful was again called and commanded by the king to fetch the writings from the castle, or he must die.

Then he went once more into the stable, and said: 'Oh, my dear little white horse, I am to go away again! How can I do his?'

Then the horse said: 'The ships must be again laden.'

So he went as before, and the giants and birds were satisfied by the food and pacified. When they came to the castle, the horse told Ferdinand that he must go into the princess's bedroom, and on the table lay the writings; and Ferdinand went in and got them.

When they were on the lake he let his pen fall into the water; then the white horse said: 'I cannot help you now.'

But he remembered his flute and began to play on it, and a fish came with the pen in his mouth and gave it to him. So he took the writings to the castle, where the marriage was celebrated.

The queen could not love the king, because he had no nose, but she would have liked to love Ferdinand the Faithful.

Once when all the lords of the court were together, she said she could do magical tricks—that she could cut off a head and put it on again, and that one of them ought to try it. No one, however, would be first, so Ferdinand the Faithful, at the instigation of Ferdinand the Unfaithful, undertook it.

She cut off his head and put it on again, and he was cured directly, but it looked just as if he had a red thread round his neck.

Then said the king to his wife: 'My child, how have you learnt that?'

'Well,' said she, 'I understand the art. Shall I try it on you?'

'Oh yes,' said he.

Then she cut off his head, but did not put it on again. She said she could not get it on right—that it would not keep fixed. Then the king was buried, and she married Ferdinand the Faithful.

He still continued, however, to ride his white horse, and once it told him that he was to go on the heath and ride round it three times.

When he had done so, the white horse stood up on its hind-legs, and was changed into a king's son.

THE LAZY SPINNER.

In a village there lived a man and his wife, and the wife was so lazy that she would never work; that which her husband gave her to spin, she did not spin, and what she did spin she did not wind, but let it all lie entangled in a heap. If the man scolded her she was always ready with her tongue, and said: 'How can I wind it if I have no reel? go into the wood and get me one.'

'If that is all,' said the man, 'I will go to the wood and get some wood for reels.'

Then the wife was afraid that if he had wood he would make a reel of it, and she would have to wind and spin more. So she

thought a little, and a good idea occurred to her, and she ran secretly to the wood after her husband. When he had



THE LAZY SPINNER.

climbed a tree to select the wood and to cut it down, she crept into the bush where he could not see her, and cried out:

‘Who cuts down wood for reels dies;
Who winds perishes.’

The man listened, laid down his axe, and wondered what it could mean. ‘What,’ said he at last, ‘what can it have been that sounded in my ears! Make thyself no unnecessary fear.’ Then he seized the axe afresh, and was about to hew the wood, when again a voice from below cried:

‘Who cuts wood for reels dies;
Who winds shall perish.’

He stopped, became anxious, and thought over the matter. But after awhile he took courage a third time, stretched out his hand for the axe, and was going to hew. But for the third time the voice said:

‘Who cuts wood for reels dies;
Who winds *shall* perish.’

He had had enough, and all desire to cut was past, so he hastily got down and went home. The woman ran home by side ways and so came to the house before him. When he entered the room she appeared as if nothing had happened, and said: ‘Do you bring good wood for reels?’

‘No,’ he said; ‘I see that winding does not do,’ and he told her what had occurred in the wood, and henceforth left her in peace.

Soon after the man began again to get angry about the disorder in the house.

‘Wife,’ said he, ‘it is a shame that the yarn which is spun should lie about in a heap.’

‘I tell you what,’ said she: ‘as we have no reel, you go upstairs and I will stay down; then I will throw the yarn up to you, and you will throw it down to me, and thus we have a skein.’

‘Very well,’ said the man.

So they did it, and when it was done the man said : 'It is now in skeins, but it must be boiled.' The woman was again anxious about it, but said : 'We will do it early to-morrow morning ;' but she was thinking of some other trick. She got up early, lighted the fire and put on the kettle, but instead of the yarn she put in a lump of tow, and let it boil. Then she went to her husband, who lay in bed, and said to him : 'I must go out ; get up and see after the yarn which is in the kettle on the fire ; but you must do it in time : take care, for if the cock crows before you look after it the yarn will become tow.' The man was willing, and did not delay ; as quickly as he could he went into the kitchen. When he came to the kettle and looked in, he saw with fright nothing but a lump of tow. The poor man was silent ; he thought that he had delayed, and that it was his fault, and in future said nothing about yarn or spinning. But you must allow that his wife was a wicked woman.

THE WHITE AND THE BLACK BRIDE.

A WOMAN one day was going to a field with her daughter and her step-daughter to cut clover for their cattle, when the Lord came walking towards them in the form of a poor man, and said : 'Will you show Me the way to the town ?'

'If you want to know, find out for yourself,' said the mother.

'As you are so very anxious to find the way,' said her daughter, 'you had better engage a guide.'

But the step-daughter said : 'Poor man, come with me ; I will take you a little way and show you.'

Then the Lord in anger turned His back on the mother and daughter, leaving upon them a spell by which they both became as black as night and as ugly as sin.

He then accompanied the step-daughter, and as they drew

near the town, He said : ' Choose for yourself three things, and I will grant them.'

Then said the maiden : ' I should like to become as pure and beautiful as the sun.' Immediately she became fair and beautiful as the daylight. ' Then I should like to have a purse of money which would never be empty.' This the Lord gave her, and said : ' Do not forget what is good.' And then, as her third request, the maiden asked that she might reach heaven when she died. This was also granted, and immediately the Lord vanished.

When the mother and daughter came home, and saw that they had both become coal-black and ugly, while the step-daughter was fairer and more beautiful than ever, wicked envy rose in their hearts, and they thought only of how they could injure her.

The step-daughter, however, had a brother named Reginar, whom she loved very much, and she told him everything that happened to her. One day her brother said to her, ' Dear sister, I love you so much that I mean to have your likeness taken, and then I shall have your face always before my eyes.'

' Very well,' she replied ; ' but pray do not let anyone else see the picture.'

So he had her picture painted, and hung up in his room at the king's castle where he lived, for he was coachman there.

Every day he stood before it, and thanked God for his dear sister. Not long before this time the queen had died, and the king was full of grief, for she had been so beautiful that none like her could be found anywhere.

The court servants observed that the coachman stood daily before the beautiful picture, and, being envious of him, informed the king.

Upon this the king desired the picture to be brought to him, and when he saw how it resembled his dead wife, only that it was still more beautiful, he fell desperately in love with it. He sent for his coachman, and when he appeared asked him whose

likeness it was. The coachman replied that it was his sister. Upon hearing this the king resolved that no other woman should be his wife, and gave him a royal carriage and horses, and beautiful clothes embroidered with gold, and sent him to fetch his sister to be the king's bride. When Reginer arrived with this message his sister was full of joy.

But her black sister was overpowered with jealousy at this good fortune, and, vexed beyond measure, said to her mother: 'What is the use of all your cleverness if you can't get me such luck as this?'

'Be quiet,' said the old woman; 'I will manage it all for you.' And through the power of her witchcraft she dimmed the eyes of the coachman so that he could hardly see, and deadened the sound in the ears of his sister till she became almost deaf.

Then they all got into the carriage—the fair maiden in her beautiful dress, and the mother with her daughter—while Reginer sat on the box and drove. After they had travelled a little way, Reginer said to his sister: 'Take care, dear sister, that you do not crush your clothes; I want you to look well when you are taken to the king.'

But the maiden could not hear distinctly, so she said to her mother: 'What does my dear brother say?'

'Oh,' she replied, 'he says you must take off your gold-embroidered clothes and give them to your sister.'

She immediately did as her step-mother said, and the black maiden dressed herself in the royal clothes, and gave her dark gray frock to her beautiful step-sister.

Then they travelled on still farther, and Reginer again told his little sister to take care of her clothes, that she might appear beautiful before the king; but she could not hear, and said: 'What does my brother say?'

'He says now,' replied the step-mother, 'that you are to give your sister your golden cap.'

So the cap was taken off, and the beautiful maiden's hair

was without ornament. And so they travelled on, and again her brother said something to her which she could not bear, and asked her step-mother.

'He says,' replied the wicked woman, 'that you must get down here.'

They were driving over a bridge where the water was deep. The maiden stood up to get out of the carriage, when the cruel woman gave her a push which sent her into the water. At the moment she sank, a snow-white duck appeared on the surface of the water, and swam about. The brother, who had not noticed what happened, drove on till they came to the castle. They alighted, and the coachman, who thought the black maiden was his sister, when he saw the sparkle and glitter of her dress, led her to the king. When the king caught sight of the dreadful ugliness of the maiden, he was so angry with the coachman that he ordered him to be thrown into a dungeon full of snakes and vipers. The old witch, however, bewitched the king and blinded his eyes, so that he allowed her and her daughter to remain at the castle, and at last he did not notice her ugliness, and appeared inclined to make her his wife.

One evening, when the king was sitting with the black bride, there came to the kitchen-door a beautiful white duck, and said to the kitchenmaid: 'Please make a fire here that I may warm and dry my feathers.'

So the kitchenmaid lighted a fire on the hearth, and the duck came in, and, seating herself by it, plumed and stroked her feathers with her beak. Presently she said: 'What is my brother Reginer doing now?'

'Nothing,' said the maid; 'Reginer is shut up in a dungeon with snakes and adders.'

'And what is the black witch doing, and where is her daughter?'

'They are both with the king, and he will marry the daughter.'

'Heaven forbid !' said the duck, and she went out and swam away. The next evening she came again, and said the same words. But when this happened a third time, the kitchen-maid felt that she ought to tell the king, so she went to him and described what the duck had said and done. 'I will come and see for myself,' he said ; and the next evening, when the duck pushed her head through the kitchen-door, the king drew his sword and cut it off. The next moment there stood before him a beautiful maiden, exactly like the picture which his coachman had shown him. So he sent for beautiful clothes, and told her to put them on, and led her into the castle quite joyfully. She then told him of the falsehood and cunning which had been used to betray her, till at last she had been pushed into the water of the brook. She begged, as her first request, that her brother should be released from the dungeon.

When the king had granted this petition, he went to the old witch and her daughter, and ordered them to be dragged to death by horses in a cask full of spikes. The king then married the beautiful maiden, and rewarded her brother, so that he became quite a rich man.

IRON HANS.

NEAR the castle of a king stood once a large forest, inhabited by wild beasts of every kind. One day the king sent a hunter into the forest to kill a stag, but the hunter did not return again. 'He has met with some accident,' said the king, and sent two hunters to search for him, but they remained away also. On this the king summoned his staff of hunters and said: 'Go and search through the wood in every direction, and do not give up till you find the three men.'

But of all this number none returned, and not one of the

pack of hounds that went with them was ever seen again. After this, no one would venture into the wood. The still and lonely place seemed uninhabited, excepting that sometimes an eagle or a hawk would fly over the tree-tops.

Many years had passed when a foreign hunter announced himself to the king as seeking a situation, and offered to go into the dangerous wood. He only asked for support during the enterprise. The king, however, was unwilling to grant him permission, and said: 'The wood is haunted, and I fear you will not fare better than others, and will never come back.'

'My lord king,' he replied, 'I will venture; I know not what fear is.'

The hunter started for the wood with his hound. It was not long before the hound saw some game and wished to run after it. He had, however, scarcely taken two steps when a dark pool rose before him, a naked arm was stretched out of the water, and the dog was seized and quickly drawn under.

On seeing this, the hunter went back quickly and fetched three men, whom he told to bring pails to empty the pool. When they reached the bottom, there lay a wild-looking man, whose body was brown, like rusty iron, while his long tangled hair hung over his face, and reached to his knees.

They bound him with cords, and led him away to the castle. Everyone was astonished at the wild man; the king had him locked up in an iron cage, and placed in the court, and forbade any person to open the cage door under pain of death; and the queen herself was to keep the key. After this, the forest was quite safe to walk in.

The king had a son, eight years old, who often played in the court, and one day, while tossing his gilded ball, it fell into the iron cage. The boy ran fearlessly to the wild man, who was called Iron Hans, and said, 'Give me my ball.'

'No,' he replied; 'not unless you open the door of my cage.'

'I must not do that,' said the boy; 'the king has forbidden it; and he ran away.'

The next day he came again, and asked for his ball; but the wild man replied: 'Open the door, and you shall have it.' The boy still refused, and went away.

On the third day, while the king was out hunting in the forest, the boy came again, and said: 'You may as well give me my ball, for I cannot open the door, even if I wanted to, for I have not the key.'

'It is under your mother's sofa pillow; you can easily fetch it,' was the reply.

The boy, who wanted very much to have his ball, threw to the wind all thought, went in, fetched the key, and unlocked the cage door.

It opened with difficulty, and the boy pinched his finger; but when the door was opened the wild man came out of the cage, gave up the ball, and rushed away. The boy, in a terrible fright, called after him, screaming: 'Wild man, wild man, don't go away! I shall be beaten if you do.' The wild creature turned round, lifted up the boy, seated him on his shoulder, and walked with hasty steps to the forest.

On the king's return he noticed the empty cage, and asked the queen how it had happened.

'I do not know,' she replied; and she sought for the key, but it was gone.

She called the boy, but he did not answer.

The king sent messengers to seek him in the fields, but he was not to be found; and then they rightly guessed what had happened, and the whole castle was thrown into deep sorrow.

When the wild man reached the dark wood, he lifted the boy from his shoulder, and, placing him on his feet, said: 'You will never see your father and mother again; but I will take care of you, because you set me free, and I have some gratitude and pity. If you do all I tell you, I will make you very happy, and I have more gold and richer treasures than anyone in the whole world.' He then made the boy a nice bed in the moss, where he slept peacefully all night.

The next morning the man led him to a well, and said: 'See how bright and golden this water is, and yet it is as pure as crystal. Now you must sit here, and take care that nothing falls into it, otherwise it will be disturbed. In the evening I will come and see if you have followed my instructions.'

The boy seated himself on the brink of the well, and saw that many gold fish and golden snakes were swimming about in the water, and was very careful to let nothing fall in. While he thus sat, his finger began to ache so terribly that he could not help putting just the tip into the water, to cool it. He pulled it out again very quickly, and, oh, how surprised he was to find it covered with gold! In great trouble, he tried to wipe it off, but without success.

In the evening came Iron Hans, and when he saw the boy he said: 'What is the matter with the well?'

'Nothing, nothing,' he answered, holding his finger behind his back, that Iron Hans might not see it.

But the man said: 'You have dipped your finger in the water. This time it does not matter; but be careful in future not to let anything fall in.'

The boy went to the well early the next morning to watch, as before. The finger was again painful, and to avoid touching the water he raised his hands above his head, and in so doing, unluckily, a hair fell into the water of the well. He took it quickly out, but it was already covered with gold.

When Iron Hans came in the evening, he knew at once what had happened. 'You have let a hair fall into the well,' he said. 'I will try you once more; but if it happens again, the well is disgraced, and you will not be able to remain any longer with me.'

On the third day the boy again seated himself by the well, and would not even move his finger, although it was still painful. But the time seemed so long that he tried to amuse himself by looking at his face reflected on the surface of the water. While stooping lower, to examine it better, his long

hair drooped over his face, and fell into the water. He raised his head quickly, but the hair had already become golden, and shone like the sun.

You cannot imagine how terrified the poor child was. He took his pocket-handkerchief and bound it round his head, hoping that the man would not see it.

But when Iron Hans came, he knew all that had happened, and said: 'Take off that handkerchief.' And as the boy did so the golden hair fell on his shoulders, and, excuse himself as he might, it was all useless.

'You have not been able to stand the test,' said the man, 'therefore you cannot remain here. You must go out into the world and learn by experience what it is to be poor. But as you have not a bad heart, and I have a kind feeling for you, I will allow you to call upon me to help you. If you fall into trouble, come to the forest and cry, "Iron Hans!" and I will render you assistance immediately. My power is great—greater than you think—and gold and silver I have in abundance.'

The king's son on hearing this left the wood, and travelled for a long time over beaten paths and unfrequented roads till he came to a large town. Here he sought for employment, but as he had not been taught any trade, he found it very difficult to obtain. At last he went to the castle, and asked the people of the court to take him in. They were rather puzzled to know what the boy was fit for, but they were very much pleased with his appearance, and told him he might stay.

The cook said he might make the boy useful in the kitchen, to cut wood, and draw water, and sweep up the ashes. Once, however, after he had been some time at the castle, the cook told him to go and lay the cloth for the king and wait upon him. He went to the king's chamber, but, wishing to hide the golden hair, he kept on his hat.

The king, noticing this, said to him: 'If you come to a royal table you should take off your hat.'

'Ah, my lord king, I cannot,' he replied; 'I have a sore head.'

The king on hearing this sent for the cook, scolded him well, and asked him how he could take such a youth as that into his service, and ordered that he should be immediately dismissed. The cook, however, pitied the boy, and exchanged him with the gardener's helper. In the garden the boy had to dig and rake, and plant and sow, let the weather be as bad as it might.

One day in summer, while he was in the garden at work, the heat was so great that he was obliged to take off his hat to cool himself. As he did so, the sun shone upon his gold-covered hair, and it glittered and sparkled in its light so brightly that the reflection was thrown into the sleeping-chamber of the king's daughter, and she started up to see what caused it. She was surprised to find that the bright locks belonged to a youth at work in the garden. She, however, called him, and said, 'Bring me a bunch of flowers, will you?'

In all haste the youth put on his hat, and then gathered wild-flowers to make a bouquet for the princess. As he was ascending the steps, he met the gardener, who said to him: 'How can you take such a nosegay as that to the princess, with nothing but common field flowers? Go away quickly and fetch others—the rarest and most beautiful in the garden.'

'Ah, no,' said the youth; 'wild-flowers are stronger, and will please her better.'

When he entered the room in which the princess sat, she said: 'Take your hat off; you don't appear to know how to behave yourself before me.'

'I dare not,' he replied; 'pray do not ask me.'

Without another word she rose, and, coming towards him, seized the hat and pulled it off. Down rolled the golden hair over his shoulders—the most beautiful that ever was seen. He wanted to run away, but she held him by the arm and gave him a handful of ducats. He thanked her, but he did

not care for the money, and as he left the castle he met the gardener, and said to him : ' See, here is all this money ; I don't want it ; give it to your children to play with.'

The next day the princess again desired him to bring her a nosegay of fresh flowers, and when he entered her room she suddenly caught hold of his hat to pull it off, but he held it firmly with both hands, and she could not remove it. However, she gave him again a handful of ducats, which he would not keep, but sent them to the gardener's children.

The third day the same thing occurred. He took the princess a nosegay ; she tried to pull off his hat, but without success, and he would not keep the money.

Not long after this war was declared, and the king assembled his people ; but he knew not if he could offer resistance to the enemy's forces, which were superior in strength to his own : they had a great array.

Then the gardener's boy said : ' I am grown-up now, and I should like to go to battle, if I could have a horse.'

The soldiers laughed at him, and said : ' When we are gone, then you go and look in the stable ; we will leave a horse there for you.'

He went to the stable, as they had told him, and found a horse, certainly ; but it was lame in one foot, and halted as it walked. He mounted his sorry steed, however, and rode away to the forest, and called out three times, ' Iron Hans !' so loud that the trees echoed the sound.

In a moment the wild man appeared, and said : ' What do you wish for ?'

' I want a strong horse to carry me to the battle,' he replied. ' That you shall have, and more than you want.' On saying this the wild man went back into the forest ; and presently appeared a groom leading a beautiful horse, snorting and curvetting, which could scarcely be held in ; and behind him followed a troop of warriors clothed in bright steel, their swords glittering in the sun.

The youth gave up to the groom his three-legged horse, mounted the other, and rode away at the head of his troop of warriors. When they reached the battle-field, they found that a large number of the king's troops had already fallen, and it would not have taken much to make the others yield.

Then the young man rode into the field with his troop of steel-clad warriors, drove like a storm at the enemy, and overpowered all resistance. They took to flight; but he attacked them, and left none alive. Instead, however, of going to the king, he turned and led his troop back to the wood, and called for Iron Hans.

'What do you wish for now?' said the wild man, when he appeared.

'Take back your horse and your warriors, and give me my three-legged nag again.' His wish was complied with, and he rode home on his three-legged horse.

Meanwhile, the king returned to the castle, and his daughter came to him and congratulated him on his good fortune.

'It is not my victory at all,' he said; 'but owing to a strange knight who came to our help with steel-clad warriors.'

The princess wanted to know who this strange knight was, but the king could not satisfy her. He told her that he and his soldiers had followed the flying enemy, and had not been seen since. The princess also inquired of the gardener where his garden assistant was gone.

The gardener laughed, and said: 'He has been away, and returned again on his three-legged horse, and the other servants have been jeering and laughing at him, and crying out: "Here comes our Hunkypuns back again!" And they asked which hedge he hid behind. He said he had done better than any of them, and that the victory would not have been won without him! And at this they laughed more than ever.'

The king told his daughter a few days after that he intended to celebrate the victory in a festival which should last three days. And you shall have a golden apple to throw among the

visitors,' he said, 'and perhaps this unknown warrior may be there.'

As soon as the invitations were sent out, the young man went into the forest, and called Iron Hans.

'What do you wish for now?' he asked.

'I want to catch the golden apple when the princess throws it.'

'You may be as sure of it as if you had it now,' said Iron Hans. 'And you shall have a red suit of armour and a chestnut horse to ride on.'

The appointed day arrived; the young man presented himself at the castle and mixed with the other knights, and no one recognised him. During the entertainment the princess stepped forward, and threw among the knights a golden apple. It was caught by the stranger, who immediately slipped out and disappeared.

On the second day Iron Hans provided him with a white suit of armour, and he rode a gray horse. Again he caught the apple, and after doing so did not stop a moment, but rode quickly away. At this the king became angry, and said he could not allow it, and that whoever caught the apple ought to show himself and give up his name. He therefore gave orders that if this strange knight again caught the apple, and left in such haste, he was to be pursued and brought back; and if he would not return willingly they were to use force.

The third day of the festival arrived, and the young knight this time appeared in black armour, and riding a splendid black horse with which Iron Hans had supplied him. Again he caught the apple, and instantly rode away, followed by the king's people; but it was not possible to overtake that fleet horse, although one approached near enough to wound the young knight in the leg with the point of his sword. He kept his seat, however; but his horse started so violently that his helmet fell off, and they could see the golden hair that lay scattered on his shoulders. So they rode back, and told the king all that had happened.

The next day the princess asked the gardener where his young assistant was. 'He is at work in the garden to-day,' he replied. 'But the wonder to me is that he should have been at the festival, and only came back last night; and he has also shown to my children three golden apples, which he says he has won.'

On hearing of this the king ordered him to be sent for; and he made his appearance as usual with his hat on. But the princess went quickly towards him, and as she pulled it off, down fell the golden hair on his shoulders, making him look so beautiful that they were all astonished.

'Are you the knight,' asked the king, 'who has attended the feast each day in a different coloured armour, and caught the three golden apples?'

'Yes,' he replied; 'and there are the apples,' he continued, taking them out of his pocket, and offering them to the king. 'If you wish for farther proof, I can show you the wound which one of your people inflicted with his sword when they followed me. I am also the knight who helped you to conquer the enemy.'

'If you can perform such deeds as these,' said the king, 'you cannot be a common gardener. Who is your father?'

'My father is a mighty king,' he replied; 'and I have money quite as much as I want.'

'I see plainly,' said the king, 'that I owe you more than thanks. Can I do anything to show my gratitude?'

'Yes, indeed,' replied the young knight. 'You can give me your daughter to be my wife.'

The young maiden laughed as she said, 'I shall raise no obstacle; for I knew by his golden hair that he was no gardener's son.' And then she went forward and kissed him.

To the marriage came his father and mother, who were overjoyed, for they had given up all hopes of seeing their dear son again.

On the day of the marriage, while they sat at the wedding-feast, all at once the music ceased, the door opened, and a

able-looking king stepped into the room, followed by a magnificent retinue. He approached the bridegroom, embraced him, and said, 'I am Iron Hans. I was once a wild man while under the sorcerer's spell; but you have set me free. All the treasures that I possess shall now be yours.'

THE THREE BLACK PRINCESSES.

EAST INDIA was besieged by an enemy who would not retire until he had received six hundred dollars. Then the townspeople had it proclaimed that whoever would give the money should be burgomaster. Now, there was a poor fisherman who fished in the sea with his son, and the enemy came and took his son prisoner and gave the father six hundred dollars for him. Then the father went and gave them to the lords of the town, and the enemy went away and the fisherman became burgomaster. It was proclaimed then that whoever did not say 'Mr. Burgomaster' should be sentenced to the gallows.

The son escaped from the enemy and came to a great wood on a high hill. The mountain opened up, and he beheld a large enchanted castle, in which chairs, tables, and benches were all hung with black; and three princesses came, who were dressed all in black except that they had a little white on their faces. They told him not to be afraid, they would not hurt him, and he could deliver them. He said he would willingly do it if he only knew how. They told him that he must not speak to them, nor look at them, for a whole year. What he wanted to have he should ask for; and if they dared give him an answer they would.

When he had been there some time, he said he would like to see his father; they replied that he might, and they gave him a purse of gold; he was to put on some clothes they presented to him, and in eight days he was to be back again.

He was then caught up, and was immediately in the East Indies. He could not find his father in the fisher's hut, and asked the people where the poor fisherman could be. They said that he must not say that, or he would come to the gallows. Then he came to his father, and said, 'Fisherman, how did you come here?'

Then the father said, 'You must not say that, for if the lords of the town were aware of it, you might come to the gallows.' He, however, would not stop, and was brought to the gallows.

When he was there, he said, 'Oh, my lords, give me leave to go to the old fisher's hut.' Then he put on his smock-frock, and came again to the lords, and said, 'Look well at me: am I not the son of the poor fisherman? In this dress did I gain bread for my father and mother.'

And now his father recognised him, and asked his pardon and took him home. Then he told them all that had happened to him: that he had come to a forest on a high mountain, that the mountain had opened, and that he had come to an enchanted castle where all was in black, and three princesses had come to him, who were all black except a little white on their faces, and they had told him not to fear, that he could deliver them. Then his mother said that it might not be right; he should take some holy water with him and drop some boiling water on their faces.

He went back again, but he was afraid, and dropped water on their faces as they slept, and they all turned half-white. Then all three princesses sprang up, and said, 'You wicked fellow! our blood shall cry for vengeance on thee, and there is no man born or will be born who can deliver us. We have still three brothers, who are bound in chains; they shall tear thee to pieces.'

Then there was a noise over the whole castle: he leapt out of the window and broke his leg; the castle sank into the ground, and the mountain was shut up, and no one knows where and what it was.

THE LAMB AND THE FISH.

THERE lived once a little brother and sister who were very fond of each other. Their own mother was dead, and they had a stepmother who did not love them at all, and tried secretly to injure them.

It happened one day that the two children were playing in a meadow near the house, with several other children. In this meadow was a pool that came up to one side of the house, and on its banks the children were singing :

‘ Encké Bencké, that’s the word,
Will you be my little bird ?
Birdie a sugar-stick will give,
That will I to the good cook give,
The cook will give to me some milk ;
The milk I will to the baker take,
And he will make me a sugar-cake ;
The cake I then shall give to puss,
And she will quickly catch a mouse !
I shall hang it up in the house,
And then it is mine.’

While singing this the children held hands, and danced round in a circle. One who stood in the middle pointed with her finger to each child at each word, and when the word *mine* occurred the child who was pointed at ran from the circle, and the others had to run after him to catch him.

As the children were thus amusing themselves, and chasing each other about merrily, the stepmother looked out of window, and when she saw them so happy, wicked envy rose in her heart, and, in her spite, she used her power of witchcraft, and changed them both : the boy into a fish, the girl into a lamb.

A sorrowful little fish might now be seen swimming about in the stream, while near its banks, in the meadow, stood a pretty little lamb, too sad to eat even a blade of grass.

It happened, not long after, that the stepmother had visitors at her house, and she thought it would be a nice opportunity to get rid of the children. So she called the cook, and told her to fetch the lamb from the meadow and kill it, 'as we have nothing else for our guests.'

Then the cook fetched the lamb, and brought it into the kitchen; and she took up the knife to kill it, when she saw a fish swimming in the water in the front of the kitchen sink, and the lamb cried out :

'Ah ! little brother in the sea,
 Sadly my fond heart weeps for thee ;
 The cook is whetting the cruel knife
 To take away my life.'

Then the little fish answered :

'Ah ! little sister, my heart is sad,
 And, oh ! my fate will be quite as bad,
 Down in the deep, deep sea.'

When the cook heard the lamb speak these sorrowful words, and the fish answer them, she was frightened, and knew that it was not a natural lamb, but some human being whom her wicked mistress had bewitched. So she said : 'Do not fear; I will not hurt you.' And she fetched another lamb from the field, and prepared it for the visitors.

She then took the bewitched lamb to a peasant's wife, and told her all about it. This woman had been wet-nurse to the little girl, and guessed who it was, and took her to a wise woman.

The wise woman pronounced some good words over the lamb and the fish, and at once the spell was broken, the children returned to their proper shapes, and went away together to a great forest, in which stood a small but very pretty house. Here they lived, although lonely, yet contented and happy, for the rest of their lives.

MOUNTAIN SESIMA.

THERE once lived two brothers—one was poor, the other rich ; but the rich brother gave the poor one nothing, and he had to work hard for his living. Times were sometimes so bad that his wife and children had not even bread to eat.

One day he was driving his cart through a wood, and noticed at the side of the path an opening through the trees, and behind them a large barren mountain which he had never observed before. So he stood still, and looked at it with surprise.

As he so stood he saw twelve fierce-looking men coming towards him. Thinking they were robbers, he drew his cart behind the bushes, and climbed up a tree to see what would happen. The twelve men went and stood before the mountain, and cried : ' Mountain Sesima, Mountain Sesima, open thyself.' Immediately the sides of the mountain parted asunder, and the twelve men walked in, and immediately it closed after them.

In a short time, however, it again opened, and the twelve men came out carrying heavy sacks on their backs, and as soon as they were all in the open air they turned to the mountain and said : ' Mountain Sesima, Mountain Sesima, close thyself.'

The sides instantly came together, and there was no longer any entrance to be seen, and the twelve men went away.

As soon as they were out of sight the poor man came down from the tree, and felt very curious to know what could be concealed in the mountain. So he placed himself before it, and said : ' Mountain Sesima, Mountain Sesima, open thyself ;' and the mountain stood open before him. He stepped in, and found that the whole interior was a mine full of silver and gold, and behind the gold lay heaps of pearls, and sparkling, precious stones like hoarded grain.

The poor man hardly knew what to do, or whether he dare take anything from these treasures. At last he filled his pockets with gold, leaving the pearls and precious stones lying untouched. When he came out of the mine, he remembered to say, 'Mountain Sesima, Mountain Sesima, close thyself.' And immediately the mountain closed, and the poor man took his cart from behind the bushes, and drove it home to his house.

He now wanted for nothing, care had fled, and he could buy beer and wine, and all he required for his wife and children. They lived for a long time in happiness and peace, but he did not forget to give to the poor, and was kind to everyone.

When the money was spent, however, he borrowed of his brother a bushel measure, and fetched some more gold and silver; but the rich treasure he did not touch. At his third visit he also borrowed the bushel of his brother.

The rich brother had for a long time been jealous of his brother's fortune and his happy household, and he could not imagine where he obtained these riches, and what he wanted the bushel for. Then a cunning thought came into his head: he would spread pitch over the bottom of the bushel; and when the measure came back there was a piece of gold sticking to it.

Immediately he went to his brother, and asked him: 'What have you been measuring with my bushel?'

'Wheat and barley,' said the other. Then he showed him the piece of gold, and threatened him that if he did not tell the truth he would complain of him to the justices. And the poor man told his brother all that had occurred.

On this, the rich brother had the horses harnessed to a waggon, and drove away, quite determined to make good use of the opportunity, and bring away richer treasure than mere gold and silver. When he came to the mountain, he cried: 'Mountain Sesima, Mountain Sesima, open thyself.' The mountain obeyed; and as he went in the mountain closed upon him.

There lay the riches all before him, and he for a long time was in doubt what first to lay hold of. At last he selected as many precious stones as he could carry, and turned to go out of the mountain with his load.

But his heart and thoughts had been so full of the riches and treasures that he had forgotten the words, and said: 'Mountain Simeli, Mountain Simeli, open thyself.' But that was not the right word, and the mountain did not move itself, but remained closed.

He became terribly frightened; but the longer he thought over the word the more puzzled he became, and all his treasures now were useless to help him. Evening came, and then the mountain opened and the twelve robbers came in. They quickly saw him, and laughed as they said: 'Have we caged you at last, little bird? did you think that your visits were not noticed? The first and second times we could not touch you; but this is the third time, and you shall not escape.'

Then he cried out piteously: 'It was not I, indeed it was not I until to-day; it was my brother.'

But he might beg for his life, and say what he would: all was useless; they cut his head off.

THE TURNIP.

THERE were once two brothers who had both served in the war as soldiers; one was rich, the other poor. The poor brother was determined to work for his living, so he took off his soldier's uniform and became a farmer. In one of his fields, after he had dug and ploughed it well, he sowed turnip seed. After a time, when the seed sprang up, one turnip grew to such an enormous size, and continued to increase, and became so thick and large that it almost seemed as if it would never stop growing at all.

People called it the prince of turnips, for none had ever been seen like it before, nor ever would again. At last it grew so big that it would have quite filled a waggon, and would have required two oxen to draw it. The farmer hardly knew what to do with it, or whether it would bring him luck or misfortune.

At last he thought to himself, 'Suppose I sell it. I should not get much, certainly, for such a great thing, and why should I eat it myself when little turnips do just as well? No; I think the best thing I can do is to carry it to the king, and make him a present of it.' So he laid the turnip on his waggon, harnessed the oxen to it, carried it to the castle, and presented it to the king.

'What a strange-looking thing!' said the king, when he saw it. 'Many most wonderful things have passed before my eyes, but never such a monster as this. From what kind of seed did you grow it? or has it come to you as a favourite of fortune?'

'Ah, no!' replied the farmer. 'I am no child of fortune, only a poor soldier; and, as I had nothing to live upon, I hung up my soldier's coat on a nail, and took to tilling the land. I have a brother who is rich; but, my lord king, you yourself know that those who have nothing are forgotten by all the world.'

Then the king felt so much sympathy for the poor man that he promised to present him with enough, not only to overcome his poverty, but to make him as rich as his brother. So the king gave him money, and fields, and meadows, and made him so very rich that his brother's possessions could not be compared with his.

When the brother heard of these riches, and that they had all been acquired through a large turnip, he was envious, and thought over every possible way in which he might be able to obtain such luck. He decided at last to present to the king fine horses and gold, and thought that, of course, he would give him pure, really valuable presents in return. If the king

had given so much to his brother for a turnip, what might he not expect for these beautiful things?

The king accepted the presents, and said he could think of nothing better or more uncommon to offer him in return than the large turnip. So the rich brother was obliged to hire a waggon and oxen, lay his brother's turnip on it, and drive the waggon home.

In his anger and rage at the king's treatment, he knew not what to do, till at last his wicked thoughts excited him to go and shoot his brother.

He hired murderers, who were to lie in ambush, and then he went to him, and said: 'Dear brother, I have discovered a hidden treasure. Let us go together to dig it up, and divide it.'

Without the least suspicion the brother agreed to go with him. While they were on their way, however, the murderers fell on him, bound him, and would have hanged him on a tree; but there sounded in the distance a voice singing merrily, and the clatter of horse's hoofs.

In great terror the intended murderers pushed the bound body into a sack, and took to flight. The brother, however, struggled till he worked a hole in the sack, through which he could push his head. Just as he had done so, there came along the road a travelling scholar, a young fellow full of life and joy, singing a song as he rode through the wood. As he came near the sack the farmer called out: 'I wish you good-day, traveller.'

The scholar looked about in every direction to see where the sound came from. At last he said: 'Who calls me?'

'Raise your eyes,' cried the voice from above. 'Here sits Wisdom in a sack. I have in a very little while learnt great things, in comparison to which all scholars are vanity; and I have ascertained also that everyone who climbs up here may quickly become wiser than other men. I understand the stars and the heavenly bodies, the way the wind blows, the sand of the sea, the healing of sickness, and the strength of vegetables,

birds, and stones. Were you once in my position you would feel how gloriously wisdom flows out of a sack.'

The scholar, when he heard all this, was astonished, and cried: 'Blessed be the hour that we have met! Cannot I come into the sack for a little while now?'

This was just what he up above wanted; so he said: 'I will let you stay here for a little while presently as a reward for your kind words; but you can remain only an hour. I have learnt all I know in less time than that.'

The scholar waited; but the time appeared so long to him that he begged to be allowed to go into the sack at once, his thirst for wisdom was so great.

The man in the sack hesitated a little longer, and at last said: 'Well, then, let me down, and unbind me, and you shall get in.'

The scholar lowered the sack, and set him free. 'Now, then,' he cried, 'draw me up quickly,' and prepared to step into the sack.

'Stop, stop!' cried the other; 'not so fast.' He seized him by the head as he spoke, stuck him into the sack head foremost, drew the string tight, and raised the searcher after wisdom to the bough of the tree till he swung in mid-air. Then he said to him: 'Stay there, my dear fellow, for awhile. Do you not already feel something of the wisdom that comes from experience? Sit there, and rest till you become clever.'

Thereupon he mounted the scholar's horse, and rode away; but he sent someone in an hour to let him down and release him.

THE THREE SLUGGARDS.*

THE king of a country a long way off had three sons. He loved them all equally, and did not know to which to leave his king-

after his death. When he was dying, he called them all to his bedside, and said, 'Dear children, the laziest sluggard of the three shall be king after me.'

'Then,' said the eldest, 'the kingdom is mine; for I am so lazy that when I lie down to sleep, and a drop falls into my ear, I will not open it, but go on sleeping.'

The second said, 'Father, the kingdom is mine; for I am so lazy that, when I sit by the fire to warm myself, I would sooner have my toes burnt than draw back my legs.'

The third said, 'Father, the kingdom is mine; for I am so lazy that if I were going to be hanged, and had the rope already round my neck, and somebody were to put a sharp knife into my hands with which to cut it, I would rather be hanged than use my hand to do it.'

When the father heard this, he said, 'You shall be king, for you are the fittest man!'

THE TWELVE IDLERS.

TWELVE farm servants, who had been doing nothing the whole day, were still as unwilling to exert themselves when evening came, but lay down in the grass and boasted of their laziness.

The first spoke, and said, 'What is your laziness to me? I have to do for myself, and my chief anxiety is to take care of my body and to eat and drink as much as I can. I can have three meals a day, but I like best to fast for awhile after eating, and I feel really hungry, and then I can enjoy my food better. I don't like early rising. When I am up at noon, I find a rest-place and lie down, and if my master calls me I will not hear, neither the first time nor the second. And if at last I am obliged to rouse myself, I go as slowly as I can; and so I pass my life away.'

Said the second: 'I have a horse to take care of, but I leave his bit in his mouth, and go to sleep in the hayloft for hours. Sometimes I forget to give him his corn, but I always say he has had it. And when I wake up I put my best foot foremost, and comb him down once or twice with the currycomb, to make him look a little clean and polished. Why should I take much trouble over that? My work is not very hard.'

'Why should we plague ourselves with work?' said the third; 'no good comes from it. I often lie in the sun and sleep; or if it rains, and the drops fall on me, don't suppose I get up. No, I just lie and let it dry of itself. Once there came down such a large splash of rain that it tore the hair from my head and made a hole in my skull; but I laid a plaster on the place, and it was soon all right, and no harm done.'

'Before I begin my work,' said the fourth, 'I always dawdle about for an hour, to spare my strength; and even after this I move very slowly, and ask for others to help me. I manage to let them do the chief of my work, and just look on: but that is more than enough.'

'Oh, that is nothing to my idleness,' cried the fifth. 'Only think, I have to remove the manure from the stables, and load a waggon with it. I take it very easy, for when I toss the manure on a pitchfork, I raise it only half-way in the air, and then rest for a quarter of an hour before I throw it quite into the cart. It is as much as I can do to load a cart in a day. I have no wish to kill myself with work.'

'You ought to be ashamed of yourself,' said the sixth. 'I am not afraid of work, but I lie down and do not take my clothes off for weeks. And suppose I have no strings to my shoes, what does it matter if they fall off my feet? There is no harm done. When I wish to get upstairs, I drag one foot after the other slowly up the first step; and I count the other steps so that I know when I can rest.'

'That will not do for me,' said the seventh. 'My master looks after my work, but he is away from home all day. I

neglect nothing, however. I run as fast as it is possible for one who creeps. If I am to get on, four mighty men must push me with all their strength. I came to a bed where six men were sleeping beside one another; I lay down and slept too, and was not be awakened, and when they wanted me to go home they had to carry me.'

'Ah,' said the eighth, 'I see plainly that I am the only wide-awake chap amongst you. Why, if a stone lies before my path, I never trouble myself to lift my leg and step over it. If I lie down on the ground, and get wet or covered with mud and dirt, I do not stir, but remain there till the sun has dried up the wet or the mud. At the very most I only turn myself, so that it can shine on me.'

'I can beat you all,' said the ninth. 'This very day my bread lay before me, but, although I was starving with hunger, I was too lazy to reach my hand and take it. A jug stood by, and because it was heavy I endured thirst rather than lift it. Indeed, rather than move, I remained the whole day lying still, like a log of wood.'

'Well,' said the tenth, 'my laziness has obtained for me a broken leg and a swelled calf. Three of us were lying on the roadway, and I had my legs stretched out. A waggon came along the road, and the wheels went over them both. I could easily have drawn them back, for I heard the waggon coming, but I was too lazy. Besides this, the flies buzzed in my ears, crept up my nose, and into my mouth, but who would give himself the trouble to drive away a fly?'

The eleventh then spoke. 'Yesterday,' he said, 'I gave my master warning. I was tired of carrying his heavy books backwards and forwards, and working from morning till night. Truth to tell, he discharged me because I let his clothes in the drawer uncovered till they were all moth-eaten.'

At last the twelfth spoke, and said: 'To-day I was sent with a waggon to the field. The goods in it were covered with straw, which I made a capital bed and slept soundly. The reins

slipped out of my hand, and when I awoke I found the horse, the traces, the collar, the bit, and most of the harness gone. Someone had come by and taken them all away while I slept. The waggon had also fallen into a rut, and stuck fast. I left it standing as it was, stretched myself again on the straw, and went to sleep. My master came at last himself, and dragged the waggon out of the rut. But for this I should not have been here, but lying there and sleeping peacefully.'

THE SHEPHERD BOY AND THE KING.

THERE was once a shepherd boy who was known far and wide for his clever answers to every question. The king of the country heard of his wisdom, but he could not believe it, so he sent him an order to appear at court.

When he arrived, the king said to him: 'If you can answer wisely three questions which I will give you, then you shall be as my own child, and dwell with me in my royal castle.'

The shepherd boy replied: 'Will your majesty ask me the three questions?'

On this the king said: 'First, I want to know how many drops of water there are in the ocean.'

'My lord king,' said the boy, 'if you could have all the rivers in the world stopped up, so that not a drop could run into the sea, and I could count them, then I might be able to tell you how many drops the ocean contains.'

The king said, 'This is the next question: How many stars are there in the heavens?'

The shepherd boy replied: 'Give me a large sheet of paper.' Then he made a number of points with a pen, close together, so that they were hardly to be seen, and certainly not to be counted; anyone who looked at them would have lost his

eight. Then he said: 'Count these points, for there are as many stars in the heavens as points on the paper.'

No one could count them, so the king asked his third question: 'How many seconds of time are there in eternity?'

The shepherd boy replied: 'In Pomerania there is a diamond mountain, one league high, one league broad, and one league deep. If a little bird could go once in every hundred years, and with his little beak peck away a morsel from the mountain until the whole mountain was removed, not even then would one second of eternity be passed!'

Then the king replied: 'You have answered all my questions wisely, and shall from this time dwell with me in my royal castle, and be to me as my own son.'

THE STAR DOLLARS.

Once upon a time lived a poor little maiden whose father and mother were both dead, and she was so very poor that she had no little room to live in nor even a bed to lie on. At last all her clothes were gone excepting those she wore, and she had nothing to eat but a piece of bread, given to her by someone who had a kind, pitying heart. Still, she was good and pious, and although forsaken by all the world, she knew that God would take care of her, and she went out into the fields and prayed to Him to help her. Then she met a poor man, who said to her, 'Pray give me something to eat, for I am so hungry.'

She handed to him the whole of her bread, said, 'God bless you!' and went onwards.

Presently she saw a little child sitting by the roadside crying, and as she passed the child exclaimed: 'Oh, my head is so cold; do give me something to cover it.'

Instantly the poor maiden took off her own cap and gave it to the child. A little farther she met another child, who said she was freezing for want of a jacket, so she gave up her own. Another begged for her petticoat, and that she gave also. At last she entered a wood, where it was quite dark, and here she intended to sleep. But she had not gone far before she found another little child with scarcely any clothes at all, and



SHE HANDED TO HIM THE WHOLE OF HER BREAD.

who appeared to be almost dying with cold. The good child thought to herself, 'It is quite dark night now; no one will see me.'

So she took off all her clothes, covered the poor little shivering child with them, and went away. This pious child had now nothing left in the world at all, and she was turning to go into the wood and cover herself with the fallen leaves, when all at once a golden shower fell around her from heaven. At

first she thought that the stars, which look like golden money in the heavens, were falling ; but when the drops reached the ground they were real golden dollars, and as she stood still under the golden shower she found herself covered from head to foot with warm and beautifully fine clothes. She gathered up the golden dollars, carried them away, and was rich all the rest of her life.

THE TRIAL OF BRIDES.

THERE was a young shepherd who wished to marry. He was acquainted with three sisters, who were equally beautiful, so that his choice was a difficult one, and he could not resolve to which to give the preference. He asked his mother for advice, who said : ' Invite all three, and place cheese before them, and watch how they eat it.' The young man did so ; the first ate the cheese with the rind on ; the second cut the rind off so carelessly that she left some good cheese with it, which she threw away also ; the third cut the rind off carefully, neither too much nor too little. The shepherd told all this to his mother, who said : ' Take the third for your wife.' This he did, and lived happily with her.

FLAX LEAVINGS.

THERE lived once a young maiden who was very beautiful, but idle and careless. When she was required to spin a certain quantity of flax she was too idle to untie the little knots in it, but would break the thread and throw down whole handfuls of flax on the floor to be wasted. This idle young lady had a little servant-maid, who was as industrious as her mistress was

idle; she collected these little pieces of flax, disentangled them, spun them into fine thread, and had them made into a beautiful dress for herself.

A young man had asked the idle maiden to be his wife, and the marriage-day was fixed. But a few evenings before it took place the bride and bridegroom were walking together near the village green, where several young people were dancing. 'Look,' exclaimed the bride with a laugh, 'that is my little maid-servant; how merrily she is dancing, and thinks herself so fine in my leavings.'

'What do you mean?' asked the bridegroom.

Then she told him that her little servant had made that dress out of the tangled pieces of flax which she had thrown away, because it was so much trouble to unravel the knots. When the bridegroom heard this, and noticed her laziness, and the diligence of the young maiden, he broke off the engagement, and married the industrious servant-maid.

THE SPARROW AND HIS FOUR YOUNG ONES.

A SPARROW had four little ones in a swallow's nest; just as they were all fledged some bad boys knocked in the nest and destroyed it. The birds were all, however, fortunately able to fly away; but the old bird was very sad because her children had been driven into the world so young, and before she had warned them of its dangers, and taught them how to escape. In the autumn a large number of sparrows met together in a ploughed field, and there the old birds met their children, and, full of joy, led them home. 'Ah, my dear children,' said the mother bird, 'you cannot think how anxious I have been about you all the summer, for you were carried away by the wind before I could teach you. Now listen to my advice, and

follow the example of your father, for little birds have many great dangers to withstand.'

Then she asked the eldest how they had fared during the summer, and if they had found plenty of food.

'Oh yes,' said he; 'we stayed in a garden and sought for worms and caterpillars till the cherries were ripe.'

'Ah, my son,' said the father bird, 'it is not wrong to indulge in good things; but there is danger, and you require to be careful, especially when people are walking in these gardens. Sometimes you will find a long green twig like a perch placed ready for you, but inside it is hollow, and underneath is a little hole.'

'Yes, my father, and little green leaves are stuck all over the hole with bird-lime,' said the son.

'Where have you seen this?' asked the old bird.

'In a merchant's garden,' replied the young one.

'Ah, my child,' cried the father, 'merchants are sharp people. If you had been brought up in the world you would have learned enough of their smooth, deceitful ways; however, you must take care how to use your knowledge, and not be too confident.'

Then the old bird questioned another of his children, 'Where have you been living?' he asked.

'At court,' was the reply; 'sparrows and other simple birds are of no use where there is so much gold, velvet, silk, harness, hawks, and all sorts of good and wonderful things. We keep to the stables. There they measure oats and thresh wheat, so that we are always lucky enough to find a few grains of corn for breakfast, and every day; indeed, more than we can eat. Yes, father, and when the stable-boys measure out the corn, or make a mash for the horses, we have such a feast!'

'Where did you find all this?' asked the old bird.

'Oh, in the court with the stable-boys.'

'Oh, my son, stable-boys are often unkind and wicked; but if you have been to court and associated with great people

without losing a feather, you may think yourself well off. You have also learnt a great deal of the ways of the world, which will help you to defend yourself; but take care, the wolf often eats the most sensible little dog.'

The father after this called the third son before him, and asked: 'Where have you been trying your fortune, little one?'

'On the streets and highways,' he replied, 'for there they draw up large sacks full of corn by ropes, and a few grains of wheat or barley are sure to be dropped for us.'

'I can quite understand,' said the father-bird; 'but still you must keep a sharp look-out, for otherwise, if a stone should be thrown, there would be an end of you.'

'I am aware of that,' said the young bird, 'especially if you are near a wall, or see anyone put his hand in his pocket or his bosom.'

'Where have you learnt your wisdom, then?' asked the father.

'Among the mountaineers, dear father, who when they travel carry stones secretly with them.'

'Mountain people! working people! striking people! Have you been with the mountain lads? Then indeed you have seen and learnt something.'

At last the father called over his youngest son, and said to him, 'My dear little nestling, you, who were always the simplest and weakest, stay here with me now. In the world are many rough and wicked birds, with crooked beaks and long claws, who lie in wait for little birds to gobble them up, so you had better stay here with your own relations, and pick up the spiders and caterpillars from the trees or houses, and you will be safe and contented.'

'My father,' replied the little bird, 'you have lived and been fed in safety all your life; people have never hurt you, nor has any hawk or kite, or other bird of prey, been near you to do you injury; and this is because the great God has sent you food morning and evening. For He is the Creator and Preserver of all the birds of the forest or the city, and He hears the young

ravens when they cry, and not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without His permission.'

'My son,' said the old bird, 'where did you learn all this?'
'I will tell you,' he replied. 'When the wind separated us from you, I was driven into a church, and remained there all the summer, living upon the flies and spiders. Once I heard these words preached, that it was the Father of all the sparrows who gave me food during the summer, and preserved me from injury and from fierce birds.'

'Truly, my son,' replied his father, 'if you fly to a church, and help to clear it from spiders and summer flies, and chirp to God like the young ravens do, and will trust in Him as your own Creator, then you will be safe, even if the whole world were full of ravenous and malicious creatures.'

LAZY HARRY.

HARRY was lazy, and, although he had nothing more to do than to drive his goat daily to the meadow, he sighed when he came home in the evening after his day's work. 'Really, it is a heavy task and troublesome business,' he said, 'to drive a goat in the field year by year till late in the autumn. Oh! if I could only lie down and sleep! But no; one must keep one's eyes open, that it may not injure the young trees, and that it does not run through the hedge into a garden, or run away altogether. How can one get rest, and make one's self happy?' He sat down, collected his thoughts, and considered how he could get free from his burden. For a long time his meditations were in vain; then suddenly he felt as if scales had fallen from his eyes. 'I know what I will do,' he called out: 'I will marry fat Kate, who has also a goat, and who can drive mine with hers; then I need trouble myself no longer.'

Harry got up, put his tired limbs in motion, went across the street (for it was not far from the place where the parents of fat Kate lived), and asked for their industrious and virtuous daughter. The parents did not long hesitate. 'Birds of a feather flock together,' thought they, and they consented.

So fat Kate became Harry's wife, and drove out the two goats. Harry had a good time of it, and needed rest from no work, but from his own idleness. Only now and again he went out with her, and said: 'I only do it that I may enjoy rest better, otherwise one would lose all feeling for it.'

But fat Kate was not less lazy. 'Dear Harry,' said she one day, 'why should we make our lives unnecessarily hard, and trouble our time of youth? Would it not be better to give away the two goats, which disturb us every morning in our best sleep with their bleating, to our neighbour, who will give us a beehive for them? We will place the beehive in a sunny place behind the house, and trouble ourselves no more about it. The bees do not need to be watched and driven into the field; they fly out, find their way back to the house of themselves, and collect honey without giving the least trouble.'

'You have spoken as a sensible woman,' said Harry, 'we will execute your project without delay; besides, the honey tastes better than goat's milk, and can be kept longer.'

The neighbour willingly gave a beehive for the two goats. The bees flew out and in from early morning till late at evening, and filled the hive with the sweetest honey, so that Harry could take in the autumn a big jug full.

They placed the jug on a board, which was fixed up on the wall in their bedroom, and because they were afraid that it might be stolen from them, or that the mice might get at it, Kate fetched a strong hazel-stick and put it beside her, so that she could without any unnecessary getting up reach it with her hand, and from her bed drive away the unbidden guests.

Lazy Harry did not like to leave his bed until mid-day. 'He who gets up early said he, wastes his property.' One

morning, when it was bright day, and he still lay in bed and rested from his long sleep, he said to his wife: 'Women like sweetness, and you are always tasting the honey; it would be better, before it is all eaten up by you, that we should exchange for a goose and a gosling.'

'But not before we have a boy to take care of it,' said Kate. 'Should I be troubled with a young goose and spend all my strength unnecessarily?'

'Do you think,' said Harry, 'that a young boy will keep geese? Nowadays the children do not obey any more; they do as they please, because they think themselves wiser than their parents, just as that servant who was sent to seek for the cow, and hunted after three blackbirds.'

'Oh,' said Kate, 'he should suffer if he did not do as I told him. I would take a stick and tan his skin with untold blows. Look, Harry!' she called out in her zeal, seizing the stick with which she was to drive away the mice. 'Look how I would fall on him.'

She reached her arm out to strike, but unfortunately hit the jug of honey above the bed. The jug struck against the wall and broke in pieces, and the beautiful honey streamed on the ground.

'There lie now our goose and gosling,' said Harry, 'and do not need keeping. But it is fortunate that the jug did not fall on my head; we have cause to be grateful for that.' And, as he noticed some honey on a bit of the jug, he reached after it, and said, well pleased: 'The remainder, my wife, we will still eat with a relish, and then, after the fright we have had, we will rest a little. What does it matter if we get up a little later? The day is long enough.'

'Yes,' answered Kate, 'we shall always get to the end of it in due time. Do you know that the snail was once asked to a wedding, set out on his journey, and arrived only in time for the christening of the child. In front of the house it fell over the fence, and said, "It does no good to hurry."'

THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD.

A POOR wood-cutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the borders of a lonely forest. One morning, when he was going to his work, he said to his wife: 'Send my eldest daughter out into the wood with my dinner at noon, or I shall not get through my work, and that she may not lose her way, I will take a bag of millet with me, and strew the seeds on the path.'

As soon as the sun was at its height, and just over the wood, the maiden started on her road with a large jug of soup and some bread for her father's dinner. But the field and hedge sparrows, the larks, the finches, and other birds, had long before picked up the seeds, so that the maiden could not find the track.

She went always forward, yet the sun went down, and night came on before she could find shelter. The trees rustled in the darkness, the night owl screamed, and the poor girl was in great fear, when all at once she saw a light twinkling in the distance through the trees. 'There must be people living yonder,' she thought, 'and no doubt they will give me a night's lodging.'

She soon came to a house, through the window of which the light shone.

She knocked at the door, and a rough voice cried from within, 'Come in.' She stepped into a dark passage, and tapped at the room door. The same voice cried 'Come in,' and when the door opened she saw a very old man sitting at a table; his chin rested on his hands, and his white beard fell over it nearly to the ground. Near the stove lay three animals, a cock, a hen, and a speckled cow. The maiden told the old man of her trouble, and asked if she could have a night's

adging. Instead of answering her the old man turned to the animals and said :

'Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we keep her here or no ?

The animals made certain sounds which meant that she was to stay. So the old man said : ' You will find plenty of everything here, so go into the kitchen and cook us some supper.'

The maiden found an abundance of all she wanted, and after cooking a dish full of good food she placed it on the table, and sitting herself with the old man ate a hearty meal, but she never thought of the animals. When she was satisfied, she said : ' I am very tired, where is a bed on which I can sleep ?' In reply, came a voice :

' You can eat and drink,
But you cannot think
Of poor animals such as we ;
You shall have a bed.
Just to rest your head,
But you don't know where it will be.'

Then the old man told her to go upstairs, where she would find a room with two beds in it ; she was to shake the beds well, and make them both. The young maiden went quickly upstairs, made her own bed, and without thinking of one for the old man, she lay down and went fast asleep. After awhile the old man came up to his room, and, finding his bed not made, shook his head, and seeing the maiden sleeping, opened a trap-door in the floor, and let down the bed on which she lay into the cellar beneath.

Meanwhile, the wood-cutter returned home in the evening very late, and reproached his wife for having left him the whole day hungry. ' It is not my fault,' she said, ' I sent the maiden with your dinner at noon, and I suppose she must have lost her way ; she will be back again to-morrow, no doubt.'

Before day, however, the wood-cutter was obliged to be off

to the forest, and he desired his wife to send his second daughter with his dinner. 'I will carry a bag of linseed with me this time,' he said, 'as the seeds are larger than the millet; she will see them more easily, and will not be likely to lose her way.'

But at noon, when the maiden went with her father's dinner, the linseed had disappeared; the birds of the forest, as on the day before, had picked them all up, so that there were none left. She also wandered about all day, and at last found a good supper and a night's lodging in the old man's cottage; but she also never thought of feeding the animals, or of making the old man's bed, so at night while she slept, he opened the trap-door and let her down into the cellar below as he had done her sister. On the third morning, the wood-cutter told his wife; 'You must send our youngest child with my dinner to-day, she is always good and obedient, she will not lose her way as her sisters have done; they wander about like wild bees when they swarm.'

The mother, however, would not listen. 'No,' she said, 'why should I lose my dearest child now that the others are gone?'

'Don't fear,' he said, 'the maiden will never wander, she is too clever and sensible; besides, I will take a quantity of peas with me and strew them in the way to show her the right path; they are so much larger than linseed, and will be sure to remain.'

So the next day the mother, with much advice and caution, sent her youngest daughter to the forest. She carried a basket on her arm, but there were no peas to guide her; they were all in the crops of the pigeons, and therefore she knew not which path to take. She was very unhappy, and thought how hungry her poor father would be, and how her mother would fret if she remained away all night. However, in her wanderings after dark, she also saw the light, and came, as her sisters had done, to the house in the wood. She went in and begged

for a night's lodging so gently that the man with the white beard said to his animals :

'Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we keep her here or no ?'

The voice answered 'Yes,' and presently the maiden went over to the stove where the animals lay, stroked the smooth feathers of the cock and hen with her hand, and rubbed the spotted cow between the horns. When the old man told her to go and cook some supper she got it ready very quickly; but when she placed the dishes on the table, she said : 'I am not going to fast myself with all these good things while the poor animals have nothing. There will be plenty left for me, and I shall take care of them first.'

Then she went and fetched some barley, which she scattered before the chickens, and a whole armful of sweet hay for the cow. 'Eat that up, you dear animals,' she said, 'and perhaps you are thirsty, so I will bring you some fresh water.'

Then she brought in a large basin of water, and the cock and hen sprung on the brink, dipped in their beaks, and lifted their heads in the manner that birds always do drink, while the spotted cow took a long draught. After the animals were fed the maiden seated herself at the table, and ate what the old man had left for her. In a very little while the fowls had their heads behind their wings, and the cow began to blink her eyes, so the maiden said : 'Shall we not go to rest ?'
And the old man cried :

'Little chicks and spotted cow,
Shall we let her sleep here now ?'

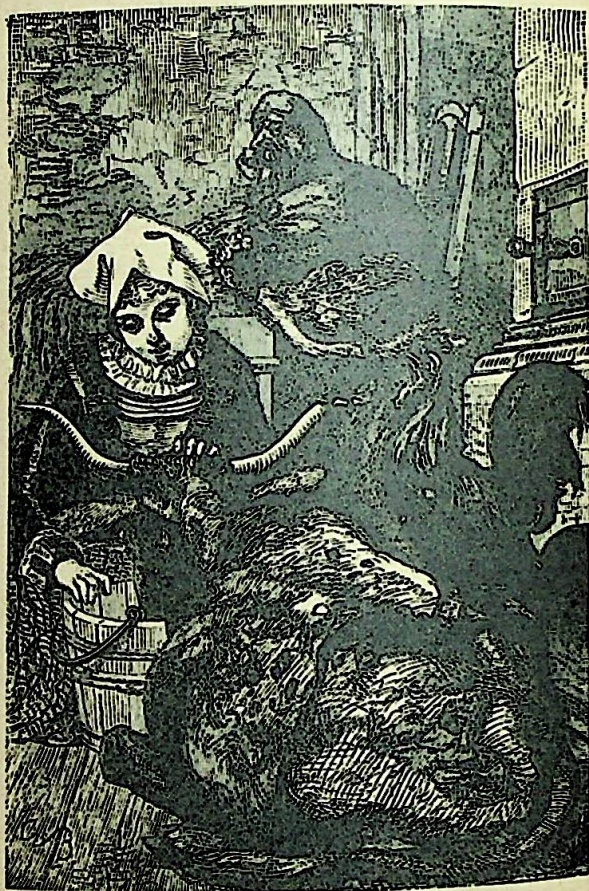
And they replied quickly :

'Yes, for she is very good,
She has brought us drink and food.'

Then the maiden went upstairs, shook both beds, and made them up, and presently the old man came to his room, and

when he laid himself on the bed his white beard nearly reached to his feet.

The maiden also said her prayers, and lying down slept



THE SPOTTED COW TOOK A LONG DRAUGHT.

peacefully till midnight, when a number of strange noises awoke her. The corners of the house were creaking and cracking, the doors sprang open and struck against the walls. The

others groaned, as if their joints were broken and separated; the stairs were turning upside down, and at last there was a crash, as if the roof and the walls had fallen in together. Then all was still.

The maiden had been too frightened to move, and all had happened so quickly that she would have had scarcely time to do so. But now, finding she was not hurt, and still in her comfortable bed, she lay quiet and went to sleep again.

But in the morning, when the bright sunshine awoke her, what a sight met her eyes! She was lying in a noble room, and everything around her as splendid as the furniture of a royal palace. The walls were covered with golden flowers on a silken ground. The bed was of ivory, and the covering of red velvet, and on a chair near it stood a pair of slippers embroidered with pearls.

The maiden fancied herself in a dream; but while she considered three neatly-dressed servants came in, and asked her what they could do for her.

'Nothing,' she replied; 'only go away, and I will get up and cook the old man's breakfast for him, and give those dear animals their food.'

She dressed herself quickly, and went to the old man's room; but what was her astonishment to see lying on the bed a strange man, asleep. While she stood, and saw with surprise that he was young and handsome, he woke, raised himself, and said: 'Don't go away; I am a king's son, and a wicked witch changed me into a bearded, gray old man. My castle was changed into the wooden house, and my servants into a cock, a hen, and a spotted cow. The spell was never to be broken unless a maiden came to visit us who had a kind heart, and who was as careful to feed poor animals as human beings, and you are that maiden. And at midnight, while we slept, we were all through you set free; the old wooden house is again a royal castle, and the animals are restored to their former shape as my servants. I will now send them to fetch your

father and mother, that they may be present at our marriage, for you are to be my wife.'

'But where are my sisters?' she asked.

'I have shut them up in the cellar,' he replied; 'but to-morrow I will send them to work in the mines till they have learnt that animals require to be fed and kindly treated, as well as human beings.'

SHARING LOVE AND SORROW.

THERE was once a tailor, who was a quarrelsome man, and his wife, who was good, diligent and pious, could never please him. Whatever she did, he was discontented, grumbled, scolded and struck her. When the authorities at last heard of it, they had him brought before them, and put him in prison in order to improve him. He was kept for a time on bread and water, then he was set free, but he was made to promise that he would not beat his wife any more, but live peaceably with her, and share his joys and sorrows with her, as married people ought to do. For a time all went well, but then he went back into his old ways, was surly and quarrelsome. And because he dared not strike his wife, he pulled her by the hair and tore it out. The woman escaped him and ran out into the yard, but he ran after her with his yard measure and scissors, chased her about and threw at her the yard measure and scissors and whatever came to his hand. When he hit her he laughed and when he missed he stormed and swore. This continued so long, that the neighbours had to come to the help of the wife. The tailor was called up again before the authorities, and reminded of his promise.

'Dear gentlemen,' answered he, 'I have kept my promise. I have not beaten her, but have shared joy and sorrow with her.'

'How can that be,' said the judge, 'as she again brings such complaints against you?'

'I have not struck her, I only wished to comb her hair with my hand as she looked so strange; but she escaped me and left me spitefully. Then I hurried after her, and, in order that she might return to her duty, I threw at her as a well meant present, whatever came to my hands. I have shared joy and sorrow with her, for as often as I struck her, it has been a joy to me, and a sorrow to her; if I have missed her, it has been a joy to her and a sorrow to me.'

The judges were not satisfied with this answer, but gave him the reward he deserved.

THE WILLOW WREN.

In golden times, every sound had a sense and significance of some sort. When the hammer of the smith sounded, it was as if it said: 'Strike! Strike!' The sound of the plane on the mill said, 'You have it, you have it.' When the mill-wheel began to clack, it said, 'Help God! help God!' and if the miller was a cheat, it seemed to say, 'Who is there? who is there?' and then to reply, 'The miller, the miller;' and when the mill went very fast, 'Stealing six out of eight! stealing six out of eight!'

In these good old days the birds had a language of their own, which everyone could understand, although it sounded only like twittering, screaming, and whistling, and was really music without words. An idea rose among the birds that they would no longer without a master, but would choose one of their number to be king. One voice only was raised against this proposal; the plover declared that he had lived free and he would die free. Full of anxiety, he flew about here and there

among the birds, crying, 'Where shall I be? where shall I be?' Then he returned to his lonely home in the marshes, and has never since associated with his fellows.

The birds were determined to have a general meeting on the subject, so one fine May morning they assembled in great numbers from woods, fields, and meadows: the eagle and the bullfinch, the owl and the crow, the lark and the sparrow, and many more that could be named; even the cuckoo was present, and the hoopoe—who is called the cuckoo's clerk, because his note is heard a few days after him—and a very little bird without a name also mixed with the flock.

The hen, who, as it happened, had heard nothing of the whole matter, wondered at such a large gathering. 'Cluck, cluck, cluck, what are they all going to do?' she cackled. But the cock quieted his dear wife, and explained what the birds were about.

Meanwhile, it was decided that the bird who could fly the highest should be chosen as king. A green frog who sat in the bushes, when he heard this, croaked, and said there would be many tears shed. The crow, however, said, 'Caw, caw, it will be all settled in a friendly manner.' They decided to make the experiment of flying the next morning, so that none should be able to say afterwards, 'I could have flown higher had it not been evening, and I was too tired to do any more.'

At the appointed signal, the whole flock rose in the air. There was quite a cloud of dust scattered about, and such a rustling noise and flapping of wings—it was as if a dark cloud had passed over the sun. The little birds, however, remained, they could not fly so high. The large birds kept up for a long time; but none could compete with the eagle, for he went so high that if they had followed him the sun would have put out their eyes.

When the eagle saw that the others could not follow him, he thought to himself, 'I need not go any higher; I am sure to be chosen king.'

And the birds beneath him cried out, 'You must be our king; none can fly as high as you do.'

'Excepting I,' cried the little fellow without a name, who had crept unseen among the wing-feathers of the eagle, and mounted with him, and as he was not tired, he flew in the air still higher and higher till he could almost peep into heaven. When he had reached this height, he folded his wings together and sank gradually down to earth, exclaiming in his shrill but delicate voice, 'I am king—I am king!'

'You our king?' cried the birds in a rage; 'no, no; you have gained your position through trickery and cunning!'

However, they were obliged to make another condition about who should be king, and they decided that it should be he who sank lowest into the earth. The goose, on this, cackled loudly and laid her broad breast on the ground; the cock scratched away quickly to make a hole; the duck, however, got into trouble, for she jumped into an open grave, and sprained her leg so terribly that she was obliged to waddle away to the nearest pond with the cry, 'Rare work, rare work!'

The little bird without a name, however, went in search of a mouse-hole, and as he slipped in, he cried with his shrill voice, 'I am king—I am king!'

'You our king?' cried the other birds, in a rage. 'Do you suppose your cunning tricks can avail you?' So they shut him up and made him prisoner in the mouse-hole to starve, and the owl was placed sentinel to prevent the little rogue from escaping, as he valued his life.

In the evening all the birds felt very tired with the great efforts they had made in flying, so they all went home with their wives and children to bed. The owl alone remained by the mouse-hole, staring into it with her great grave eyes; but at length she also became tired, and said to herself, 'I can easily shut one eye, and if I keep the other open, the little wretch shall not escape.' She closed one eye, and with the other kept a steadfast look on the mouse-hole.

The little fellow peeped out once or twice, and thought, as the owl appeared asleep, that he could slip away; but the owl saw him, and made such a quick step forward that he darted back in a hurry. A little while after the owl thought she would rest one eye and open the other, and so keep on changing all night; but when she closed one, she forgot to open the other, and very soon both eyes were shut up, and she was fast asleep.

The little one soon perceived it, and flew away. From that time the owl has never dared to show herself by daylight, lest the other birds should peck off her feathers and pull her to pieces; so she flies about in the night time, and pursues and catches the mice who can make such dangerous holes. And the little bird also keeps out of her way, for he fears she will catch him by the neck and soon make an end of him. He lives in the hedges, and is constantly crying out, in a piping voice, 'I am king—I am king!' The other birds, therefore, call him in mockery the *hedge-king*.*

No one, however, was more pleased at not having to obey the wren than the lark. The moment she caught sight of the sun, she would rise in the air, singing, 'Ah, how beautiful that is! how beautiful that is!'

THE SOLE.

THE fish were for a long time discontented because no order prevailed in their kingdom. None turned aside for the others, but all swam to the right or left as it pleased them, darting between those who wished to remain together, and getting in their way; and the stronger gave the weaker a stroke with the tail that drove him away, or else he swallowed him without troubling. 'How happy we should be if we had a king who would enforce right and justice among us!' said they;

they met together to choose for their king the one who could dart through the waves quickest, and give help to the weak. They placed themselves by the shore in rank and file, and the pike gave the signal with his tail, on which they all started like an arrow the pike darted forward, and with him the herring, the gudgeon, the perch, the carp, and all the rest. The sole also swam with them, and hoped to reach the goal. At once the cry was heard, 'The herring is first! the herring is first!'

'Who is first?' cried angrily the flat, envious sole, which was far behind. 'Who is first?'

'The herring, the herring!' was the answer.

'The naked herring?' cried the envious one. 'The naked herring?'

Since then the sole, as a punishment, has its mouth on one

THE BITTERN AND THE HOOPOE.

'Do you like best to feed your flocks?' asked a man an old cowherd. 'Here, sir, where the grass is not too dry and not too poor, or else it is of no good.' 'Why not?' asked the man.

'Do you hear, then, that melancholy cry from the meadow?' asked the cowherd. 'It is the bittern. He was once a hoopoe, and so was the hoopoe. I will tell you the tale.'

The bittern tended his flock in rich green meadows, where flowers grew in abundance, so that his cows became fat and wild. The hoopoe drove his cattle in the high mountain, where the wind plays with the sand, and the cows became thin and got no strength. When it was time for the herds to go homewards, the bittern could not bring his cows together, as they were so high-spirited, and

ran away from him. He called out, 'Come, cows, come!' but in vain; they did not listen to his call. The hoopoe, however, could not get his cows on their legs, they were so faint and weak. 'Up, up, up!' called he; but it was of no use, they remained lying on the sand." That is the way when one has no moderation. Even now, where they have no herds to keep, the bittern calls, "Come, come," and the hoopoe, "Up, up, up."

THE OWL.

A few hundred years ago, when the people were not nearly so clever and cunning as they are now, a strange event happened in a little town. By accident one of the great owls called horned owls had come out of the neighbouring wood by night into the barn of a citizen, and when day broke did not dare to get out of her retreat for fear of the other birds, who always when they saw it raised a frightful outcry. When the man-servant went in the morning into the barn to fetch some straw, he was frightened at the sight of the owl sitting in a corner, and ran to tell his master that a monster, such as he had never seen in his life, sat in the barn, turned his eyes round in his head, and could swallow a man without the least trouble.

'I know you,' said his master; 'you have enough courage to run after a blackbird in the field, but if you saw a dead hen you would get a stick before you came near to it. I must myself go and see what this monster is,' added the master, and went boldly to the barn and looked in. But when he saw with his own eyes the strange and frightful animal, he betrayed no less fear than his servant. He sprang out in a few steps, ran to his neighbours, and begged them to help him against an unknown and dangerous animal, otherwise the whole town

might be in danger if it were to break loose out of the barn where it was sitting.

There arose a great noise and clamour in all the streets; the citizens came armed with spears, pitchforks, scythes, and as if they were going to attack an enemy. At last appeared the town-councillors, with the burgomaster at their head. When they had arranged themselves in order in the market-place, they advanced to the barn and surrounded it on all sides.

Then one of the boldest came forward and went in with his sword lowered, but came running out again with a cry, deadly and unable to utter a word. Then two others dared to follow him, but they fared no better. At last stepped forth a great strong man, who was famous on account of his warlike deeds, and said: 'You will not drive out the monster by just looking at it. Here we must be in earnest; but I see that you have become old women, and no one dares to attack it.'

He had his armour, sword and spear brought him, and armed himself. All praised his courage, although many were anxious for his life. The two barn-doors were opened, and the owl was seen perched in the middle of a great cross-beam. He ordered a ladder to be brought, and when it was set up, and he had prepared to mount it, they all called out to him to be brave, and commended him to St. George who had slain the dragon. When he was nearly at the top, and the owl saw that he had designs on her, and was confused also by the cries of the people, and knew not how to escape, she rolled her eyes, ruffled her feathers, snapped her beak, and cried out in a rough voice: 'Tuwhit, tuwhoo!'

'Strike, strike!' called out the multitude outside to the brave hero.

'Anyone standing where I stand,' answered he, 'would not be struck.' He did put his foot a step higher, but then began to tremble, and, half fainting, went back.

Now, there was no one else who would go into such danger. 'The monster,' said they, 'has by only snapping and breath-

ing on him poisoned and deadly wounded the strongest man to be found among us, and shall we others also risk our lives ? They deliberated on what was to be done to prevent the whole town from being destroyed. For a long time all counsel seemed in vain, until at last the burgomaster found an expedient. 'My opinion is this,' said he, 'that we pay the owner out of the common fund for this barn and all that lies in it, the corn, the straw, and the hay, to keep him from loss, and then burn down the whole building, and with it the fearful animal ; then no one need risk his life. There is no time to spare, and economy would be ill-applied here.'

All agreed to this, and so the barn was set on fire at all the four corners, and with it was burnt the owl. Whoever does not believe this must go himself there and inquire about it.

THE GOOSE GIRL AT THE WELL.

THERE WAS ONCE a very old woman, who lived with her flock of geese in a lonely spot between the mountains, in which stood also her little cottage. The waste land was surrounded by a large forest, into which the old woman hobbled with her crutch every morning, for she was very active—more than anyone would have believed, considering her age. She gathered grass for her geese, plucked quantities of the wild fruit that she could reach, and carried it all home on her back.

One might have expected that such a heavy burden would weigh her to the ground, but she always brought it safely home. If she met anyone on her road, she would greet him in a friendly manner, and say, 'Good-morning, farmer ; it is beautiful weather to-day. You wonder how I can drag this load, but we must all bear our own burdens on our backs.'

The people, however, did not like meeting her, and went another way ; and if a father saw her when he was walking with

children, he would say to them: 'Avoid that old woman: she has mischief behind her ears; she is a witch.'
 One morning a very handsome young man was walking in the forest. The sun shone brightly, the birds sang in the



HE ESPIED THE OLD WITCH KNEELING ON THE GROUND.

...ches, a cool breeze rustled the leaves, and he was full of
 For a time he met no one, when suddenly he espied the old
 ... kneeling on the ground and cutting the grass with her
 ... Already she had a large bundle of it packed away into

her sack, and by her side stood two baskets filled with wild pears and wild apples.

'Ah, good mother,' said the youth, 'how are you going to carry all that?'

'I must carry it, dear sir,' she replied. 'Rich people's children need not do such hard work, but with us peasants it is different. Will you help me?' she added, as he still stood near her. 'You have a straight back and young limbs: to you it would be a light burden.'

The youth could not help pitying the old woman, so he said:

'My father is certainly not a peasant, but a rich count; but to prove to you that peasants are not the only people who can carry burdens, I will carry yours for you.'

'If you will do this for me,' she replied, 'I shall be very thankful. It is not more than an hour's walk, and there are those baskets to carry, but that will be nothing to you.'

The young man became very thoughtful when he heard of an hour's walk, but the old woman would not let him off; she loaded him with the sack of grass and hung the baskets on his two arms, and said, 'See, now, isn't it very light?'

'No, it is not at all light,' said the young count, making a woful face; 'the bundle weighs as heavy as if it were full of large pebble stones, and the apples and pears seem like lead; I can scarce ly breathe.'

He wished to place the burden on the ground again, but the old woman would not allow him. 'See now,' she said scornfully, 'the young gentleman cannot even support a load which an old woman like me has carried so often. You are very ready with your fine words, but when it comes to the real thing you are as ready with your excuses. Why do you stand there? Come, step out and lift up your legs; no one can take that bundle from your back now.'

So the young count started, and as long as he walked on level ground he got on very well; but when they reached a mountain, and he found he had to climb up, he began to lose

and the stones rolled under his feet as if they were Drops of perspiration stood on his forehead and ran his back, making him feel hot and cold alternately. 'Mother,' he said, 'I cannot go any farther; I want to

You must not rest yet,' replied the old woman; 'by-and-by, when we reach the end of the journey, will be the time to rest; you must go forward, and it may bring you good fortune.' 'You are a shameless old woman!' said the young count, trying to throw the sack from his shoulders; but he tried in vain, as fast as if it had grown there, and twist and turn as might, he could not get free. The old woman only laughed and danced round him on her crutches. 'Don't excite yourself, dear sir,' she said; 'you are getting as red in the face as a cock. Carry your burden with patience, and when we come you shall have a good reward.'

What could he do? He was obliged to submit to his fate with patience, and follow the old woman, who appeared to grow younger and more active as his burden grew heavier. All at once she made a spring, jumped on the sack and seated herself on it, and though she was so thin and withered, she was heavier than the stoutest peasant girl.

The weight was so much increased that the youth's knees trembled under him, and if he stopped for a moment the old woman struck him with a strap and with stinging nettles on the back. Under this constant goading, he at last ascended the hill, reached the old woman's cottage just as he was ready to fall with fatigue. As soon as the geese saw the old woman they spread out their wings and ran to meet her, crying, 'Wulle,

behind the flock walked a middle-aged woman with a staff in her hand, strong and big, but as ugly as night. 'Mother,' she said, 'has anything happened? what makes you so late?' 'Don't be alarmed, my daughter,' replied the old woman; 'nothing wrong has occurred, quite the reverse. This young

count has not only carried my burden for me, but when I was tired he actually carried me on his back also. The way has not seemed long, for we have been quite merry together, joking and laughing as we came along.'

At last the old woman slipped the sack from the youth's shoulders and took the baskets from his arms; then, looking at him kindly, she said: 'Now go and sit on that bench before the door and rest yourself; you have honestly earned your reward, and it shall not be kept from you.'

Then she turned to the goose-tender and said: 'Go into the house, my daughter; it is not proper for you to be alone with this young count, or he may fall in love with you. We ought not to pour oil on fire.'

The young count hardly knew whether to laugh or to cry at the idea of falling in love with such a 'treasure.' 'Why, if she were thirty years younger,' he thought, 'she would fail to move my heart.'

Meanwhile, the old woman caressed and stroked her geese as if they had been children, and at last went into the house to her daughter. The youth stretched himself on the bench under a wild apple tree, the breeze blew soft and warm, around spread a green meadow covered with primroses, wild thyme, and a thousand other flowers. Through the meadow flowed a clear stream which reflected the sun's rays, while the white geese swam gently on its surface, or dived beneath its tranquil waters.

'It is delightful here,' he said to himself; 'but I am so tired I cannot keep my eyes open; I think I will sleep for awhile. I hope, however, the wind will not rise and blow away my legs; they seem to have lost all their power.'

After he had been asleep some time, the old woman came and shook him till he woke. 'Stand up,' she said; 'you must not stay here. I certainly did treat you rather badly, but it has not killed you after all, and now you shall have your reward; it is neither money nor property, but something better still.'

Thereupon she placed in his hands a small casket which had cut out of one emerald. 'Take great care of it,' she said; 'it will bring you good fortune.'

On hearing this, the count jumped up, and feeling himself refreshed and strong, he thanked the old woman for her advice, and started on his homeward journey without one of his beautiful daughter, although, after walking for some time, he could still hear the loud cackling of the geese. The young count wandered about for three days before he could find the right road, which at length led him to a large town. Of course he was unknown, so they took him to the palace, where the king and queen were seated on their thrones. The count knelt on one knee before the queen, and, taking out the emerald casket from his pocket, laid it at her feet.

He requested him to stand up and to let her examine it. And sooner had he done so than she opened it, and the next moment fell to the ground as if dead.

The count was immediately seized by the king's servants, and would have been led off to prison had not the queen quickly recovered, and, opening her eyes, ordered him to be released.

'Let everyone leave the room,' she said. 'I must speak privately to this stranger.'

When they were alone the queen began to weep, and said: 'I am surrounded by grandeur, and pomp, and show; but what is the use of all these, when I wake every morning to sorrow and grief? I once had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so beautiful that all the world looked upon her as a wonder. Her skin was fair as a snow-flake, with a tint on her cheeks like a rose-blossom, and her hair was as bright as a sunbeam. When she wept, pearls and precious stones fell from her eyes instead of tears. As soon as she reached the age of fifteen, the king ordered his daughters to be presented at court. But when the youngest appeared she attracted all eyes by her great beauty, and the people said it was as if the sun had just risen upon

‘The king then spoke : “ My daughters, I know not when my last hour may come, but to-day I will decide what each of you are to have after my death. You all three love me, I know, but whoever loves me best shall have the best place in my will.”

‘They each said they loved him best.

‘“ Well, then, can you express your love for me, that I may judge?”

‘Then said the eldest, “ I love my father better than the sweetest sugar.”

‘The second said, “ I love him better than the most beautiful of my dresses.”

‘But the youngest remained silent.

‘At last the king said, “ And you, my dearest child, how much do you love me ?”

‘“ I know not what to compare my love to,” she replied. But her father pressed her to make some comparison, and at last she said, “ The best food does not taste good without salt, therefore I love my father as I love salt.”

‘When the king heard this he fell into a rage, and said, “ If you love me like salt, then with salt shall your love be rewarded.”

‘He then divided his kingdom between the two eldest, and after ordering a bag of salt to be bound on the back of his youngest daughter, she was led out into the wild forest by two servants, and left there. We all prayed and entreated for her, continued the queen, ‘but nothing would soften the wrath of the king. She wept so much when she left us that the whole way she went was strewn with pearls which fell from her eyes. The king soon regretted his cruel harshness, and had the whole forest searched to find her, but she has never been heard of since. When I think she may have been devoured by wild animals, I am overwhelmed with grief, and I can only console myself by the hope, that I am wrong, and that she is living concealed in some cavern, or that she has been protected under the care of some charitable person who took pity on her.

Then I opened the emerald casket which you presented to me, you may imagine my surprise at seeing within it one of the pearls which used to fall from my daughter's eyes when she was young, and you will understand how the sight moved my heart. Now tell me how that pearl came into your possession.' This the young count related what had happened in the forest, and described the old woman who had met him, and who had given him the casket. He said this old woman appeared to him as a witch, who held the forest under her enchantments; but the king's daughter he had heard or seen nothing.

Hearing all this the king and queen decided to go and find the old woman. They thought that where the pearl had been found they should be sure to hear news of their daughter. The old woman sat by the door of the cottage, spinning at her wheel. It was growing dark, and a burning faggot on the hearth gave but a feeble light. All at once a noise was heard without: the geese were coming home from the meadows, cackling as loudly as they could. The daughter took them to their usual place, and then stepped into the cottage; but her mother scarcely thanked her, only nodded her head. She turned herself, however, without a word, to her spinning-wheel, and spun away as fast as any young girl could have done.

The king and queen both sat like this for two hours, without speaking a word to each other. At length something rushed against the door, and the fiery eyes of a night owl appeared, and presently screamed her weird note three times.

The old woman slightly raised her head at the sound, and said, 'Now is the time, my daughter, for you to go out and do your work.'

The daughter rose immediately and went to the meadows, which lay far away in the valley, till she came to a fountain, near which stood three old oak-trees. The moon, round and full, shone so brightly over the mountain that it would have been easy to find a pin. The first thing she did was to take off a skin which she had covered her face, and then stoop down and bathe in the

cool water. After this she dipped the skin into the water, and then laid it on the grass to dry and whiten in the moonlight.

But how the maiden was changed! You could scarcely imagine her to be the same. The gray wig fell off, and her golden hair, sparkling like sunbeams, flowed over her shoulders and enveloped her like a mantle. Her eyes glittered like the stars of heaven, while her cheeks glowed with the soft bloom of the apple blossom.

But the beautiful maiden was sorrowful, for she seated herself on the ground and wept bitterly. Tear after tear fell from her eyes, and trickled through her long hair to the ground.

She sat mourning in this way for some time, and might have remained there longer had she not heard a strange cracking and rustling sound among the trees. She sprang up like a doe that hears the crack of the hunter's gun. A dark cloud at the same moment covered the face of the moon, and in the twinkling of an eye she had disguised herself again in the skin and the gray hair, and disappeared like a light blown out by the wind. Trembling like an aspen leaf, she ran back to the house and told what had occurred to the old woman, who stood at the door; but she only smiled pleasantly, and said, 'I know all about it, my child.'

Then she led her in, and lighted a fresh faggot; but instead of again seating herself to spin, she took a broom, and began sweeping and dusting the room. 'We must have everything clean and neat,' she said to the maiden.

'But, mother,' she replied, 'why do you begin to work at such a late hour as this? What is it for?'

'Well, what o'clock is it?' asked the old woman.

'Not yet midnight,' she replied; 'but the clock has struck eleven.'

'Do you not remember,' said the woman presently, 'that it is three years to-day since you came to me? The time is up, and we cannot remain any longer together.'

'Oh, dear mother,' cried the maiden in alarm, 'are you

to drive me away? What shall I do? I have no friends at home, and where can I go? I have always done everything you wished, and you have been satisfied with me. Oh, send me away!

The old woman seemed unwilling to tell the maiden what was going to happen, so she said: 'I cannot stop here any longer, and when I leave this house every room must be in order, so do not hinder me while I work. Don't fear, I will always be a roof to cover you, and the reward I shall give you will be sure to satisfy every wish.'

'Tell me what is going to happen,' said the maiden.

'You must not ask,' replied the woman; 'and you will disturb my work if you say another word. All you have to do is go into your own chamber, take the skin off your face, and hang it from your head; then put on the silk dress that you wore when I first saw you, and remain in your room till I call.'

She must now return, and see what the king and queen have been doing after they set out with the young count. He was separated from them in the forest, where he wandered about for days before he could find the right road, and it was then quite dark, so he climbed a tree to rest till morning, for he feared to go on his way again in the darkness.

When the moon arose and shone brightly over the forest, he saw the figure of a woman coming over the mountain. She did not carry the staff in her hand, but he knew her at once as the goose-tender whom he had met at the old woman's cottage. 'Ah,' he said to himself, 'here comes one of the witches, so I cannot be very far off!'

He was astonished he was, however, to see her come up to the tree near the tree in which he sat, and take the skin off her face to bathe in the cool water. He saw, also, that when she took off the gray wig, and her own golden hair fell around her face, that she was the most beautiful maiden he had ever seen in the world.

He could scarcely draw his breath as he gazed at her with earnest, wondering eyes; but he stretched his neck so far through the foliage that the branch cracked with his weight. At the same moment a dark cloud passed over the moon, and before he could recover himself the maiden had resumed her disguise and disappeared.

The count quickly descended from the tree, and followed her with hasty strides. He had not gone far when he saw in the dim light two figures crossing the meadow, and knew they were the king and queen. They had seen the light in the distance shining from the window of the old woman's cottage, and were hastening towards it. The count overtook them, and described the wonderful sight he had seen at the fountain, and they did not doubt for a moment that the beautiful maiden was their own lost daughter.

Full of joyful hope, they hastened their steps, and soon arrived at the cottage. Outside they found the geese in a row, standing on one leg, and fast asleep, with their heads behind their wings, but none of them stirred.

They approached, and, looking through the window, saw the old woman seated quietly at her spinning, with her head bent over her work, so that she did not see them. The room, and everything in it, was as clean and neat as if the spirits of the mist had dwelt there, whose feet are never soiled by earth's dust. Their daughter, however, was not to be seen, so, after looking for sometime, they at last took courage, and tapped at the window.

It seemed really as if the old woman expected them, for she rose up and cried in a friendly voice: 'You may come in; I know who you are!' As they entered the room, she said: 'You might have been spared this long journey if you had not sent away your dear and sweet-tempered child unjustly. However, she has met with no injury; for three long years she has tended the geese; but she has learnt nothing wicked—her heart is still pure. You have been punished by the anxiety about her in which you have lived ever since you sent her away.'

Then she stepped up to the chamber door, and said: 'Come my daughter.'

The room door opened, and the king's daughter came forth in her silken robe, with her long golden hair hanging round like a veil, and her brilliant eyes cast down. It was as if an angel had descended from the skies.

She ran to her father and mother, threw herself in their arms, and kissed them, while nothing could check their tears of joy.

The young count stood by, but when the young princess cast her eyes and saw him, her delicate cheeks became red with blushes, like a moss rose, and she hardly knew why.

Presently the king said: 'Dear child, I have given away my kingdom, and what can I give to you?'

'She wants nothing,' said the old woman. 'I have saved her from tears she has wept, and they are all pearls—far more precious than those found in the sea, and worth more than the whole of your kingdom. And as a reward for her services in saving my geese I give her this cottage.'

As the old woman said this, she vanished from their sight.

At the same moment a cracking sound was heard in the walls, and when they turned to look, the whole cottage was changed into a noble palace, a royal banquet was already spread for them, and numerous servants were in attendance.

The story does not finish here, but the old grandmother who told it to us has forgotten the end; and lately her memory has become weak.

It is very probable, however, that the beautiful daughter of the king was married to the count, and that they lived together afterwards at the palace in great happiness.

Whether the snow-white geese, whose guardian the princess had been, were really young maidens (in saying this we do not wish to be rude to our lady readers), whom the old woman had brought around her, or whether after they regained their human shapes they became maids of honour to the princess, we cannot say, but it is very probable.

This we do know, that the old woman was not a witch, as people supposed, but a good fairy, who only wished to do good. Very likely it was she who had given the princess at her birth the power of weeping pearls instead of tears. This gift is unknown in the present day, or how very soon the poor would become rich !

THE SPRITE OF THE MILL-POND.

THERE was once a miller and his wife who lived in great happiness ; they had money enough and to spare, for it went on increasing year after year. But misfortune often comes at night, or, as the proverb means, when we least expect it ; and so it was with the miller. He gradually lost all he had gained, and at last became so poor that he could scarcely call his mill his own.

He was so full of sorrow that, although he worked hard all day, he would lie tossing on his bed all night unable to sleep.

One morning he rose at daybreak, and went out, thinking that the fresh air of the morning would lighten his heart. As he passed along by the mill-dam, the first ray of sunlight glittered upon it, and he heard behind him a strange ripple of the water.

He turned quickly, and saw a beautiful woman rising gently out of the stream. Her long hair hung over her shoulders, and she put it back from her face with her delicate hands, and allowed it to fall over her like a veil. The miller saw at once that it was the water-sprite of the lake, and knew not whether to stay or fly in his fright.

But the fair vision called him by name in her soft voice, and inquired why he looked so sad. The miller had at first been almost stunned ; but on hearing her speak so kindly he took courage, and told her that, after having lived in wealth and

for many years, he was now so poor that he knew not how to help himself.

'Be at rest, then,' said the water-sprite; 'I will make you richer and happier than you have ever been before, if you will only promise to give me the first young thing that is born in your mill.'

'That will be no doubt a puppy or a kitten,' thought the miller, and at once promised what she asked.

The water-sprite immediately disappeared in the water, and the miller returned with renewed courage to his mill.

He had scarcely reached the house when a maid-servant came from the door, and told him in a joyful voice that his wife had a fine little boy. On hearing this, the miller stood thunderstruck. He saw at once that the malicious water-sprite had betrayed him into a fatal promise.

He went into his wife's room, with his head bowed down, looking so sad that she said: 'Are you not pleased at having a little son?'

When he was obliged to tell her all that had occurred, and of the terrible promise he had made to the water-sprite.

'What is the use of all the riches and honours in the world,' said he, 'if I am to lose my child?'

And now what could he do? None of his relations who used to wish him joy could give him any advice. However, on that day good fortune came back to the miller's house. Everything he did prospered. It seemed as if his chests and drawers filled themselves, and the money in his desk increased every night, and in a short time the miller was richer than

before. But his wealth could not bring him happiness, for the fatal promise to the water-sprite cruelly tormented his heart. Every time he passed by the lake, he expected to see her rise out of the water and claim her debt. He would not allow the child to come near it, and often said to him: 'Take care, my boy; if you touch that water, a hand will rise up and drag you under.'

But as days and years rolled by, and the water-sprite never again made her appearance, the miller began to feel more at ease.

When the boy grew up to a young man, he was placed with a gamekeeper, to learn the use of a gun. He was a clever lad, and soon became so expert in the business that a gentleman near the town took him into his service as gamekeeper.

In this town lived a beautiful and true maiden, with whom the young keeper fell in love. His master on hearing this gave them a small but pretty cottage when they were married, and they lived in peace and contentment, loving each other very fondly.

One day, when the keeper was hunting a deer, the animal ran out of the forest into a field, where he overtook it, and with one shot brought it to the ground. So earnest was he over his sport, that he did not notice his nearness to the dangerous water in which lived the water-sprite.

After he had killed and cut up the deer, he went to wash his blood-stained hands in the water. No sooner, however, had he touched it, than the water-sprite rose, and with a smile entwined her arms round him, and drew him down so quickly that the waves closed over him.

When evening came on, and the keeper did not return, his wife was in great trouble, and at last went out to look for him. He had often told her of the danger to which he was exposed by his father's promise to the water-sprite, and how he was obliged to avoid carefully the water of the mill-stream, and to this she hastened at once in great fear.

On arriving at the bank of the stream, she saw the game that her husband had killed lying near the water, and knew directly the fate which had come upon him. Wringing her hands, and with loud lamentations, she called him by name, again and again running from side to side of the water. She reproached the water-sprite for her cruelty with hard words, but there was no reply.

The water remained as smooth as a mirror, in which the
of the half-moon was clearly reflected. The poor young
would not leave the mill-stream ; she kept walking up and
without ceasing, sometimes in silence, and at other times
explaining in low murmurs, or uttering cries of despair.

At last she became so worn out that she sank to the ground,
fell into a deep sleep, in which she dreamed a wonderful
dream. She dreamed that she was walking over rugged rocks,
as she walked thorns and nettles pricked and stung her
The rain beat in her face, and the wind blew her long
in wild confusion. But on reaching the top a very
different scene presented itself. The sky was blue, the air soft
warm, while the sides of the mountain sloped downwards
verdant meadows, enamelled with bright flowers, in which
and a charming cottage.

She approached, and opened the door of the cottage, in
which sat an old woman with white hair, who looked kindly
at her ; but just as she was about to speak the poor wife awoke
from her dream.

Day was just breaking, and she resolved to act in accordance
with her dream. She immediately turned her steps towards
the mountain, and, after climbing up with some difficulty,
reached the top, and found all as it had appeared in her
dream.

The old woman of the cottage received her very kindly, and,
sitting to a chair, asked her to be seated. ' You must be
suffering from some great misfortune,' she said, ' or you would
not have sought my lonely hut.'

The poor wife then related with tears all that happened.
' Be comforted, poor child,' said the old woman ; ' I will help
you. Take this golden comb, and, when the moon is full, go
to the mill-pond, seat yourself on the bank, and comb out your
black hair. When you have done this, lay the comb on
the shore, and wait and see what happens.'

The keeper's wife returned home, but the time till the moon

became full seemed very long. At last, as the luminous disk appeared in the heavens, she went quickly out, seated herself by the mill-pond, and began combing her long black hair with the golden comb. When she had finished, she placed the comb on the brink of the mill-stream, and waited.

In a very short time the water bubbled up from the deep, a wave rose, rolled towards the shore, and carried away the golden comb as it receded. The comb could scarcely have sunk to the bottom, when the water divided, and the head of the gamekeeper appeared just above it.

He did not speak, but looked sorrowfully at his wife, when a second wave rose with a rushing sound, and covered the man's head. In a few moments the water lay at rest, tranquil and calm as ever, while on its smooth surface nothing could be seen but the face of the full moon reflected on it.

The poor wife returned home with all her hope fled; but during the night she again dreamed of the little cottage in the meadow, and the old woman. So in the morning she hastened to visit the good fairy, and tell her tale of sorrow.

The wise woman comforted her as before, and, giving her this time a golden flute, she said: 'Wait for another full moon, and then take this flute, seat yourself on the shore, and play upon it one of your sweetest songs, and when it is finished lay the flute on the ground near the brink, and you will see what happens!'

The keeper's wife did exactly as the old woman had told her. Scarcely had she finished her music, and placed the flute on the shore, than the water began to bubble and foam as before, and a wave rose and carried the flute away with it.

Almost at the same moment the water divided, and not only the head and shoulders, but nearly half the body, of her husband rose above the surface. He held out his arms towards her with loving eyes; but a second wave rose with a rushing sound, covered the poor man, and drew him under.

'Ah me!' cried the unfortunate wife, 'what is the use of

only having a passing glance at my dear husband, and then see him again immediately ?

Now again took possession of her heart, but on dreaming some dream about the cottage and the old woman, her was revived, and she once more paid her a visit.

This time the good fairy gave her a golden spinning-wheel, and said : ' You have not done all that is necessary yet ; you must wait for another full moon, then take the golden spinning-wheel, seat yourself on the shore, and till the bobbins are full, then place the spinning-wheel in the water and wait.'

The wife followed out all these directions correctly, but when she placed the spinning-wheel on the shore the water rolled up more violently than ever ; a mighty wave arose, in a moment swept it away. No sooner had it disappeared with a sudden flash the head, and then the whole body, the gamekeeper rose above the water, and quick as lightning sprang ashore, seized his wife by the hand and fled.

Scarcely had they gone a few steps, when the whole was raised itself with a rushing noise, and with irresistible spread over field and meadow. Already the two fugitives saw nothing but death before them ; and just as they gave themselves up for lost, they were in a moment changed—the wife into a toad, the husband into a frog.

The flood reached them, and although they escaped death, the waters separated them one from the other, and carried them in different directions. As soon as the waters receded and left them on dry ground, they each resumed their proper shape, but neither of them knew what had become of the other. They found themselves among strange people, in a foreign country, and separated from their own home by high mountains and deep valleys which lay between them. To support themselves they were both obliged to keep sheep, and for many years tended their herds and flocks in field and meadow, weighed down with sorrow and regret at being separated from each other.

Time passed on, and the sweet flowers bloomed at the breath of spring, when one day the two sad ones were tending their flocks, and the husband seeing a flock of sheep grazing on the hillside, in a pleasant green spot, led his own flock towards it, and very soon the two flocks were feeding together; but their keepers did not recognise each other, still they were each pleased to find a companion in their loneliness. From that day they led their sheep to the pasture side by side, and although they did not talk much, there was consolation in each other's society.

One evening, when the full moon was shining in the sky, and the sheep at rest around them, the shepherd took a flute out of his pocket and played a charming though mournful air upon it. When he had finished, he looked at the shepherdess, and saw that she was weeping bitterly.

'Why do you weep so?' he asked.

'Ah,' she replied, 'the full moon was shining as brightly in the sky the last time I played that air on my flute, and my dearest one appeared to me above the water.'

He looked at her earnestly as she spoke; a veil seemed to fall from his eyes, and he recognised his dear and long-lost wife; and the moon, as he looked at her, shone brightly on his face, causing her to recognise him at the same moment. They instantly fell into each other's arms, and kissed each other with joy, and from that happy moment neither of them wanted nor asked any greater good fortune.

THE LITTLE FOLKS' PRESENTS.

A TAILOR and a goldsmith were wandering together one evening as the sun was setting behind the hills, when they heard the sound of distant music, which grew more and more distinct.

tones were rather unearthly, but so charming that they forgot their fatigue, and went forward with rapid steps. The moon was up when they reached the hillside, and suddenly they caught sight of a crowd of little men and women, clapping hands, and dancing merrily in a circle to the strange music they had heard. In the centre of the ring round which the pixies danced



DANCING MERRILY IN A CIRCLE.

A little old man, yet larger and stouter than the rest. He wore a coat of many colours, and his snow-white beard reached to his breast. The travellers stood still and gazed wonder at the dancers, and presently the old man made a sign to them, and the little people separated that they might enter within the circle.

The goldsmith, who was a bold fellow, and had a slight frown on his back, stepped in without fear; but the tailor was rather timid, and held back. However, seeing how

merry and good-natured they all looked, he took heart, and entered the circle. Immediately they closed the ring again, and the little folks danced and sprang about in the wildest manner.

Meanwhile, the old man in the centre took out a large knife which hung at his girdle, sharpened it on a stone, and, feeling the edge with his finger, turned and looked at the strangers in a manner that caused them to tremble with fear.

They were not kept long in suspense, however, for the little man seized the smith, and with the greatest rapidity shaved off his hair and beard clean at one stroke! He then turned to the tailor, and did the same to him.

But their alarm vanished when the old man, after finishing his performance, slapped them on the shoulder in the most friendly manner, as if to tell them that they had done well in submitting to be shaved without resistance. He then pointed with his finger to a heap of coals that lay on one side, and made signs that they should fill their pockets.

They both obeyed, although they could not imagine what could be the use of coals to them. They then went to find a night's lodging.

Just as they reached the valley, a clock from the neighbouring cloisters struck twelve. Immediately the music ended, the little people vanished, and the hillside lay calm and still in the moonlight.

The two travellers found a shelter and laid themselves down on a bundle of straw, dressed as they were, too fatigued to think of removing the coals from their pockets. But towards morning the heavy weight awoke them earlier than usual, and, on putting their hands into their pockets, they could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw that, instead of coals, their hands were full of pure gold!

Their surprise was as great at finding that their beards had grown again, and that their heads were covered with hair. They had suddenly become very rich; but the goldsmith, who

had a greedy disposition, had filled both pockets with coals, so that he possessed twice as much gold as the tailor.

Yet he was not satisfied, and he proposed to his companion that they should stay till the next day, go again in the evening, and get more treasures out of the little old man.

The tailor, however, refused. 'I have enough,' he said, 'and I am quite contented. I only wish to be master of a business of my own, and to marry the charming maiden whom I love, and then I am a happy man.'

However, to oblige his friend, he stayed another day at the inn, and in the evening the goldsmith took two sacks on his shoulders, and went alone to the hillside. He found the little people dancing and singing as on the previous night.

They received him into the ring, and the old man again shaved him, and made a sign as before that he should take as much coal as he liked. He did not hesitate to fill not only his pockets, but the two sacks, and returned home, congratulating himself on his good fortune.

He laid himself down in his clothes, saying: 'I shall know when the gold becomes heavy, for it will wake me;' and at last he fell asleep with the pleasant expectation of waking in the morning a very rich man.

As soon as he opened his eyes, he started up, and began to dive into his pockets; but what was his astonishment at finding they contained nothing but black coals! Handful after handful he pulled out, but no gold.

'Well, I have still the gold I got on the first night,' he said, 'that is safe;' but what was his surprise and alarm to find it all turned back again to coal, and that he was penniless!

He put up his black hands to his head, and found that it was still bald and his chin smooth and without a beard. But he had not come to the end of his misfortunes, for the hump on his back had grown larger and made him more deformed than ever. When he discovered at last that he was being punished

for his covetousness, he began to groan and lament so loudly as to wake up the good tailor. He kindly comforted him in his misfortune, and said generously, 'Don't grieve any more; we have been companions and travellers together, and now you can stay with me and share what I have; it will be enough for us both.'

He kept his word, but the poor goldsmith never could get rid of the hump on his back, and was always obliged to wear a cap to cover his bald head.

THE NAIL.

A MERCHANT had done good business at the fair; he had sold all his goods and lined his money bags with gold and silver. He wished then to travel homewards, and be there before nightfall. He therefore packed his trunk with the money on his horse and rode on. At mid-day he rested in a town; when he wished to go on, the servant led out his horse, but said: 'Sir, the shoe on the left hind foot wants a nail.'

'Let it be wanting,' replied the merchant, 'the shoe will keep on for the six miles which I have to go, I am in a hurry.'

In the afternoon when he again dismounted to have his horse fed, the stable-boy came in the room, and said: 'Sir, your horse has lost a shoe from his left hind foot; shall I take it to the farrier.'

'Let it be wanting,' replied the man, 'for the few miles which are still to be passed the horse will keep up; I am in a hurry.'

He rode on, but before long the horse began to limp. It had not limped long before it began to stumble; and it had not stumbled long before it fell down and broke a leg. The merchant had to leave his horse lying there, to unbuckle the

trunk, take it on his shoulder and walk home, which he did not reach till late at night.

'The unlucky nail,' he said to himself, 'is the cause of all this misfortune.' Hasten slowly.

THE POOR BOY IN THE GRAVE.

THERE was once a poor shepherd boy whose father and mother were dead, and the authorities put him under the care of a rich man, who was to feed and educate him. But the man and his wife had bad hearts, were avaricious and envious, and were angry when anyone put a bit of their bread in his mouth. The poor boy might do what he would, he received little to eat and many blows.

One day he had to watch a hen and her chickens. But she ran with her young brood through a hedge, and down darted a hawk and carried her off. The boy screamed with all his power: 'Thief, thief, rogue!' But it was of no use. The hawk did not give back his prey.

The man heard the cries, and ran to the spot, and when he found that his hen was gone he flew into a rage, and gave the boy such a beating that he could not move for several days. He had now to watch the chickens without the hen, but his trouble was greater, as one ran here and another there. Then he thought it would be wise to tie them together with a string, because then the hawk could not steal one from him, but he was greatly mistaken. After a few days, being tired out with running about and with hunger, he fell asleep, and then the bird of prey came and seized one of the chickens, and as the others were tied to it, he carried them all away, perched on a tree and ate them all up. The farmer was just coming, and when he saw the misfortune he was angry, and beat the boy so unmercifully that he had to lie in his bed for several days.

When he was again up, the peasant said to him: 'You are so stupid that I cannot make you a keeper, you must go as a messenger.'

Then he sent him to the judge with a basket of grapes and a letter with it. On the way, hunger and thirst troubled the poor boy so much that he opened the basket and ate two bunches of the grapes. He brought the basket to the judge, but when he had read the letter and counted the grapes, he said: 'Two clusters are missing.' The boy acknowledged quite honestly that, driven by hunger and thirst, he had eaten the missing ones. The judge wrote a letter to the peasant and ordered again the same number of grapes. The boy had to carry these also with a letter, when he was again so hungry and thirsty, that he ate two bunches of grapes, but first took the letter out of the basket and placed it under a stone, and sat on it so that the letter might not see and betray him. But the judge again spoke of the missing grapes.

'Ah,' said the boy, 'how did you know it? the letter could not have told you, for I put it first under a stone.'

The judge could not help laughing at his simplicity, and sent the man a letter in which he warned him to treat the poor boy better, and not to let him want food, and that he should also teach him what was right and wrong.

'I will soon show you the difference,' said the hard man. 'If you wish to eat you must also work, and if you do anything wrong you must be taught by being beaten.'

On the following day he set him a difficult task. He was to cut two bundles of straw as fodder for the horses, and the man threatened him: 'In five hours,' he said, 'I shall be back again, and if then the straw is not cut into chaff, I will beat you until you cannot move a limb.'

The peasant went with his wife, the man-servant and the maid to the fair, and left the boy nothing but a bit of bread.

The boy sat on the straw seat and began to work with all his power. As he became hot over his work he took off his

coat and threw it on the straw. In his anxiety to have finished in time he cut on; and in his haste, without observing it, he cut up his little coat with the straw. When too late, he became aware of his misfortune which he could not set right.

'Ah!' said he, 'now it is all over with me, the wicked man does not threaten in vain. When he comes back and sees what I have done, he will beat me until I am dead; it is better for me to take my life myself.'

The boy had once heard the peasant's wife say that she had a pot of poison under the bed. She had, however, only said that to keep it from greedy people, for there was honey in it. The boy crept under the bed, brought out the pot and ate all that was in it. 'I know now,' said he, 'why, people say that death is better, it tastes sweet to me. No wonder that the peasant's wife often wishes herself dead!'

He sat on a stool and was prepared to die. But instead of feeling weaker, he felt himself strengthened by the nourishing food.

'It cannot have been poison,' said he; 'but the peasant has said, that in his clothes-box there is a bottle of poison for flies; that will be the true poison, and will kill me.'

It was not, however, poison, but Hungarian wine. The boy got out the bottle and drank the wine up. 'This death also tastes sweet,' said he; but as the wine soon after began to mount into his brain and to stupefy him, he thought his end was near. 'I feel that I must die,' said he; 'I will go out into the churchyard and seek a grave.' He staggered out, reached the churchyard and lay in a freshly opened grave. His senses left him.

In the neighbourhood was an inn where a marriage was being celebrated. When he heard the music he thought himself already in paradise, until at last he lost all consciousness. The poor boy did not wake again; the glow of the hot wine, and the cold dew of the night took away his life; and he remained in the grave in which he had laid himself. When

the peasant received the news of the death of the boy, he was afraid of being brought to justice; in fact, the anxiety so powerfully affected him, that he sank fainting to the ground. The woman, who stood with a pan full of hot fat near the fire, ran to give him assistance. But the pan caught fire, and set light to the whole house. In a few hours it lay in ashes. The years which they still had to live, were passed in poverty and misery, tormented by pangs of conscience.

THE TRUE BRIDE.

THERE once lived a maiden, who was young and fair, but she had lost her own mother, and her stepmother did all she could to make her miserable. When she gave her any work to do, she made it as hard and heavy as possible, so that it was often almost beyond her strength. The wicked woman's envious heart made her always discontented with what the poor girl did—it was never enough to please her. The more diligent she was, and the more she had to do, the less thanks she received. It seemed always to her as if she were carrying a great burden, which made her life sad and miserable.

One day her stepmother said to her: 'Here are twelve pounds of feathers for you to sort in three different sizes, and if they are not finished by this evening you may expect a sound thrashing. Do you think you are to waste the whole day in idleness?'

The poor maiden began her task, but the tears rolled down her cheeks, for she knew it was impossible for her to finish such a task by the end of the day. She put several feathers together in heaps, but if she happened to sigh, or clasp her hands in her agony, away flew the feathers, and she had to commence her task anew.

At last she placed her elbows on the table, rested her face in

her hands, and cried : ' Is there no one in all this earth who will pity me ? '

Immediately she heard a soft voice say : ' Be comforted, my child ; I am come to help you. '

The maiden, looked up, and saw an old woman standing



THEY FLEW AND SORTED THEMSELVES UNDER HER WITHERED HAND.

near her. She took the maiden's hand, and said kindly : ' Now tell me what is troubling you. '

She spoke so heartily, that the maiden told her all about her unhappy life, and of one burden after another which her stepmother laid upon her, and of the terrible tasks which never would come to an end. ' If I do not finish sorting these feathers by the evening, ' she said, ' my stepmother has threatened to beat me, and I know she will keep her word. '

Her tears began to flow as she spoke, but the kind old woman said : 'Be at peace, my child, and go and rest awhile ; I will finish your work for you.'

The young girl lay down on her bed, and soon fell asleep.

Then the old woman placed herself at the table by the feathers. Ah, how they flew, and sorted themselves, under the touch of her withered hand ! and very soon the whole twelve pounds were finished. When the maiden awoke, there they lay in large snowy heaps, and everything in the room was neat and in order, but the old woman had vanished.

The maiden thanked God, and sat still till the evening, when her stepmother came.

She was astonished when she found the feathers finished. 'See, now,' she said at last, 'what people can do when they are industrious ! But why are you sitting there, with your hands in your lap ? Can you find nothing else to do ?' As she left the room, she said to herself : 'The creature can do more than eat ; I must give her some more difficult work.'

On the morrow she called the maiden to her, and said : 'There is a large spoon for you ; now go and ladle out the water from the pond that lies near the garden, and if by evening you have not reached the bottom, you know what you have to expect.'

The maiden took the spoon, and saw that it was full of holes ; and, even if it had not been, it would have been impossible for her to empty the pond with it.

She made an attempt, however ; knelt by the water, into which her tears fell, and began to scoop it out. But the good old woman again made her appearance, and, when she saw the cause of her sorrow, she said : 'Be comforted, my child, and go and rest in the shrubbery ; I will do your work for you.'

As soon as the old woman was alone, she merely touched the water ; it immediately rose, like a mist, in the air, and mingled itself with the clouds. Gradually the pond became empty, and when, at sunset, the maiden awoke, she saw only

the fish writhing in the mud at the bottom. She at once went to her stepmother, and showed her that she had finished her

'You should have finished it long ago,' she said; but she was pale with anger, and determined to think of some still more difficult task for the poor girl.

Next morning she again called her, and said: 'To-day I shall expect you to go into the valley, and on the plain build me a beautiful castle, which must be finished by the evening.'

'Oh,' exclaimed the poor maiden in terror, 'how can I ever perform such a great work as this?'

'I will have no excuses,' screamed the stepmother. 'If you can empty a pond with a spoon full of holes, you can build me a castle. I shall expect it to be ready to-day, and if you fail in the slightest thing, whether in kitchen or cellar, you shall know what is before you.'

She drove the poor girl out as she spoke, and, when she reached the valley, she found it full of rocks, piled one over the other, and so heavy that, with all her strength, she could not move even the smallest.

She seated herself, and began to weep; yet still hoping for the assistance of the kind old woman, who did not keep her waiting long, but greeted her, when she appeared, with words of comfort.

'Go and lie down in the shade and sleep,' she said; 'I will build a castle for you, and, when the happy time comes, you shall have it yourself.'

As soon as the maiden had gone away the old woman rolled the gray rocks, and immediately they began to move, and ran to rock together, and presently stand upright, as if they had been walls built by giants. Within these walls the castle rose, as if numberless invisible hands were at work, laying stone upon stone. The earth trembled, as large halls expanded, and stood near each other in order. The tiles on the roof changed themselves regularly, and before noon the weather-

cock, like a golden maiden with flying drapery, stood on the pinnacle of the tower.

The interior of the castle was finished at evening, and how the old woman managed I cannot say; but the walls were covered with silk and velvet, richly embroidered, and decorated chairs and sofas, marble tables, and other elegant articles furnished the rooms. Cut-glass chandeliers hung from the ceilings, and sparkled in the light of many lamps. Green parrots sat in golden cages, and foreign birds, who sang sweetly, were in every room. Altogether, the castle was as magnificent as if built for the king himself.

It was after sunset when the maiden awoke, and, seeing the glitter of a thousand lamps, she ran with hasty steps, and, finding the gate open, entered the court. The steps leading to the entrance-hall were covered with red cloth, and the gilded balconies were full of rich and blooming flowers. When she saw the magnificence of the room the maiden stood still with astonishment.

She knew not how long she might have remained standing thus, if she had not thought all at once that her stepmother was coming. 'Ah,' said she to herself, 'if she would only be contented with me, and I should be no longer tormented as I am now!' She went and told her stepmother that the castle was finished.

'I will just go and see for myself,' she said, and, rising from her seat, she followed the maiden; but, on entering the castle, the brightness so dazzled her, that she was obliged to cover her eyes with her hand. 'You see how easy this is to you,' she said. 'Ah, yes, I ought to have given you something still more difficult.'

She went into all the rooms, prying into every corner, to see if she could not find something wrong or defective; but this was impossible. 'I will go downstairs,' she said at last, looking at her stepdaughter maliciously; 'it is necessary for me to examine kitchens and cellars also, and if you have for-

one single thing, you shall not escape punishment.' Nothing was wanting: the fire burned on the hearth, the pot was boiling in the saucepan; brooms, brushes, fenders, andirons, were in their proper places, and the walls and floors were covered with brass and copper, glass and china, which glittered in the lamplight—nothing was wanting, not in the coal-scuttle, or the water-can.

'Where are the steps to the cellar?' cried the woman. 'I want to see if the casks are full of wine of the right sort, or if it will be bad for you.'

She raised the trap-door as she spoke, and descended the stairs leading to the cellars; but scarcely had she taken two steps, when the heavy door, which was not pushed back far enough, fell to with a dreadful crash. The maiden heard a scream, and followed as quickly as she could to help her unkind stepmother; but she had fallen to the bottom of the steps, and there the maiden found her dead.

And now the beautiful castle belonged alone to the maiden, who hardly knew, at first, how to understand such good fortune. In the drawers and wardrobes were beautiful dresses, which she could array herself. There was also a large chest filled with gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, so that she had not a single wish ungratified.

It was not long before the fame of her beauty and riches got known throughout the world, and the maiden had soon plenty of lovers. But she did not care to accept any of them, till at last a prince, the son of a great king, came to see her. He was the first to touch her heart, and she very soon learnt to love him dearly.

One day, as they sat talking under a linden-tree in the castle garden, the prince said, very sadly: 'My heart's love, I must leave you to get my father's consent to our marriage, but I will not stay away long. I shall be back in a few hours.' 'Be true to me,' said the maiden; 'I will wait under the linden-tree until you come back.'

The maiden remained sitting under the linden-tree until the sunset, but he did not come back. She sat there for three days from morning till evening awaiting him, but in vain. As he had not arrived on the fourth day, she said: 'Surely some misfortune has happened to him. I will go and seek him, and not return until I have found him.'

She packed up three of her most beautiful dresses, one ornamented with shining stars, the second with silver moons, and the third with golden suns, tied up a handful of jewels in her handkerchief, and started. She asked in all places for her bridegroom, but no one had seen him; no one knew of him. She wandered far and wide over the world, but found him not. At last she hired herself to a peasant as a cowherd, and buried her dresses and jewels under a stone.

Now she lived as a herds woman, kept her herd, was sad and full of longing after her lover. She had a little calf, which she taught to know her, and to feed out of her hand, and if she said 'Little calf, little calf, kneel down by my side; forget not thy herd, as the prince forgot his bride, who sat under the green linden-tree,' then the calf knelt down, and was stroked by her.

When she had lived two years solitary and full of grief, a report was spread that the daughter of the king wished to celebrate her marriage. The way to the town went past the village where the maiden lived, and it happened that as she was keeping her herd, the bridegroom passed. He sat proudly on his horse, and did not look at her, but she looked at him, and recognised her lover. It was as if a sharp sword had cut into her heart.

'Ah,' said she, 'I thought he would have remained faithful to me, but he has forgotten me.'

The next day he came again that way. When he was near, she said to the calf, 'Calf, calf, kneel down; forget not thy herd as the prince forgot her who sat under the green linden-tree.'

When he heard the voice, he looked down and stopped his

He gazed into the face of the cowherd, then held his hand over his eyes as if he wished to recall something, but quickly rode on and disappeared.

'Ah,' said she, 'he does not know me.' And her grief was greater.

Soon after there was to be a great festival at the king's court, three days, and the whole country was invited to it. 'Now I try the last thing,' thought the maiden, and when it was evening, she went to the stone under which she had buried her treasures. She brought out the dress with the golden suns, put it on and adorned herself with jewels. Her hair, which she had hidden under a cloth, was let down and fell in long curls about her. She went to the town, and in the darkness was unobserved. When she entered the well-lighted hall, everyone started back full of wonder, but no one knew who she was. The prince went to meet her, but still he did not recognise her. He led her to the dance, and was so enraptured with her beauty that he never thought of the other bride. When the festival was over she disappeared in the crowd, and hastened before the break of day to the village, where she again put on her working dress. On the next evening she took out the dress with the silver moons, and put a half-moon of precious stones in her hair. When she appeared at the festival, all eyes were turned towards her, and the prince hastened to her, and, filled with love, danced with her alone and looked at no one else. Before she went, he made her promise to come to the last evening of the festival. When she appeared the third time, she had on the dress with the stars, which sparkled at every step, and on her hair-band and collar were stars of diamonds. The prince had waited for her and hastened to her. 'Tell me only who you are,' said he; 'it seems to me as if I have known you long.'

'Do you not know what I did when you parted from me?' answered she. Then she stepped to him and kissed him on the left cheek; in a moment, as it were, scales fell from his eyes, and he recognised his true bride.

'Come,' said he to her; 'I will not stay here any longer.' He offered her his hand and led her to the carriage. As if they were harnessed to the wind, the horses hastened to the magic castle. Already in the distance shone out the illuminated windows.

When they drove past the linden-tree, innumerable glow-worms were swarming about it; it shook its branches and sent down its fragrance. On the steps the flowers were blossoming; from the room sounded the song of the foreign birds, and in the hall were assembled all the court, and the priest was waiting to marry the bridegroom and the true bride.

THE SPINDLE, THE NEEDLE, AND THE SHUTTLE.

A young girl who had lost both parents in her infancy, lived in a little cottage at the end of the village with her grandmother, who supported herself by spinning, weaving, and sewing. The old woman took care of her and brought her up to be industrious and pious. When she was in her fifteenth year the old woman fell sick, and called her to her bedside and said to her: 'Dear daughter, I feel that my end is approaching, so I will leave you this cottage and all that is in it; here you will have shelter from wind and weather, and with the needle, the spindle, and the shuttle, you can easily earn your bread.'

Then laying her hand on the maiden's head she blessed her, and said: 'Keep God always in your heart, and you will never go wrong.'

Then the old woman closed her eyes and died, and the poor girl followed her to the grave behind the coffin weeping bitterly. After this the maiden lived in the little cottage quite alone,

king diligently at her spinning and weaving, and the
singing of the old woman seemed to rest upon all she did.

It was as if the flax in the room would never be exhausted ;
no sooner had she finished weaving a piece of cloth or
pet, or had made a shirt, than a purchaser was quickly
and who paid her well, so she had as much as she needed for
her wants, and a little also to spare for the poor.

It happened about this time that the son of the king of the
country started on his travels to find a bride. He was not to
choose a poor one and he did not care for a rich one. So he
decided in his heart that he would try and find one who was
at the same time both the richest and the poorest.

When he arrived at the village where the maiden dwelt, he
inquired first for the richest maiden in the place, and on being
told, he then asked : ' And which is the poorest ? '

' The poorest is a maiden who lives at the end of the village
in a little cottage alone,' was the ready reply. ' Her cottage
is easily found, for a winding path through a field leads to it.'

The prince, in going to this cottage, rode through the village,
and at the door of a stately house sat a maiden richly dressed,
and as the king's son approached she went out and bowed
herself before him in a most courtly manner. The prince
looked at her, but he said not a word, and rode on till he
arrived at the house of the poor maiden.

She was not seated at the door, but in her own little room
busily at work. The prince drew rein, alighted from his horse,
and peeped into the neat apartment. Just at that moment a
ray of sunshine darted through the window, so that he could
see the maiden spinning at her wheel with the most earnest
diligence.

She glanced up, and seeing the prince looking at her, she
looked down her eyes and continued her spinning, while her
cheeks were covered with a rosy blush.

Whether the threads were even and regular at that
moment, we cannot say, but she continued to spin without

looking up again till the prince remounted his horse and rode away.

Then she rose and opened the window, saying to herself : 'How very warm the room is to-day.' But she looked out and watched the stranger till she could, no longer distinguish the white plume in his hat, and not till after he was quite out of sight did she return to her spinning-wheel and work as busily as ever.

Her thoughts were now on the handsome prince, although she knew not who he was. Then came into her head, a verse which the old woman had taught her, and she sang :

'Spindle, spindle, run away ;
Fetch my lover here to-day.'

The spindle leaped from her hands that very moment, and rushed out of the house. She followed to the door, and stood looking after it with wondering eyes, for it was running and dancing quite merrily across the field, trailing behind it a bright golden thread, and presently it was lost to her eyes.

Having no longer a spindle, she took up her shuttle, seated herself, and commenced weaving. The spindle, meanwhile, kept on its way, and just as the thread came to an end, it overtook the prince.

'What do I see?' he cried. 'The thread behind this spindle will lead me to good fortune, no doubt.' So he turned his horse and rode back in the trail of the golden thread.

The maiden, who still worked on, sang :

'Shuttle, shuttle, thou art free ;
Bring my lover home to me.'

Instantly the shuttle slipped from her hand, and ran to the door, but on the door-sill it stopped and began to weave the most beautiful carpet ever seen. In the centre, on a golden ground, appeared a green creeping-plant, and around it blush roses and white lilies were scattered. Hares and rabbits appeared running upon it ; stags and deer stood beneath the

liage, in which were birds of beautiful colours which seemed able to do everything but sing. The shuttle sprang here and there, and the carpet seemed to grow of itself.

As the maiden had now lost both spindle and shuttle, she was obliged to take out her needle, and while she sewed she sang:

‘Needle, needle, while you shine,
Make the house look neat and fine.’

On this the needle sprang from her fingers, and flew about the room as quick as lightning. It was just as if a number of



RODE AWAY WITH HER TO HIS FATHER'S CASTLE.

invisible spirits were at work, for the table and benches were quickly covered with green cloth, the chairs with velvet, and curtains were hung to the windows and on the walls of silk damask.

Scarcely had the needle finished the last stitch than the maiden saw through the window the white plume on the prince's hat, for he had followed carefully the golden thread till it reached her cottage.

He alighted from his horse, and quickly stepped in upon the beautiful carpet; when he entered the room he saw the

maiden, who even in her homely dress looked blooming and lovely as a wild rose.

'You are,' he said, 'at once the poorest and the richest maiden in the world. Will you come with me and be my bride?'

She did not speak, but she held out her hand to him. He kissed the hand she offered, led her out, lifted her on his horse, and rode away with her to his father's castle.

The marriage was shortly after celebrated with great splendour and rejoicings. The needle, the spindle, and the shuttle were preserved in the treasure-chamber ever after with great honour.

THE CRUMBS ON THE TABLE.

A COUNTRYMAN said one day to his little dogs: 'Come into the room and pick up the crumbs on the table; your mistress has gone out to pay some visits.'

But the little dogs said: 'No, no, we will not go; if the lady gets to know it, she will beat us.'

The countryman answered: 'She will never know it; do come. She never gives you anything good.'

The dogs said again: 'No, no, we must not go.'

But the countryman let them have no rest until at last they went and got on the table, and ate up the breadcrumbs with all their might. But at that moment the mistress came in, took the stick, and beat them very severely. When they were outside the house the little dogs said to the countryman: 'Dó, do, do, do you see?'

Then the countryman laughed and said: 'Did, did, did, did you not know?'

Then they ran away.

THE DRUMMER.

A YOUNG drummer was one evening walking across the fields, and as he came to a lake, he saw lying on the shore three pieces of white linen.

'What fine linen!' he said; and taking up one piece, he put it in his pocket. He went home, thought no more of what he had found, and went to bed. Just as he was going to sleep, he thought he heard someone call out his name, and heard distinctly a gentle voice say: 'Drummer, drummer, wake up!'

At first in the dark he could distinguish nothing, but presently he saw hovering over his bed a light form.

'What is it?' he asked.

'Give me back my dress,' answered the voice, 'which you took away from the lake yesterday.'

'You shall have it,' said the drummer, 'if you will tell me who you are.'

'Ah,' cried the voice, 'I am the daughter of a mighty king, but I have fallen into the power of a witch, and am confined to a glass mountain. Each day I am obliged to bathe in the lake with my two sisters; but without my dress I cannot fly back to the mountain, and my sisters have already gone away and left me. I pray you, therefore, to give me back my dress.'

'Be at peace, poor child!' said the drummer; 'you shall have your dress.' Then he took the piece of linen out of his pocket, and offered it to her in the darkness. She seized it hastily and was going away. 'Wait one moment,' he said; 'can I not help you?'

'You could only help me,' she replied, 'by climbing on the glass mountain and freeing me from the witch's power. But you could not reach the mountain; or even if you did, you would be unable to climb to the top.'

'What I wish to do I can do,' said the drummer. 'I feel great compassion for you, and I fear nothing; but I do not know the way to the glass mountain.'

'The road lies through a large forest,' she replied, 'where ogres abound. More than this I dare not tell you.'

Then he heard her fly away. By the break of day the drummer was up and ready. He hung his drum on his shoulder and went without fear to cross the forest. After walking for some time, and not meeting any giants, he thought to himself, 'I must wake up the lazy sleepers.' So he turned his drum before him, and played such a tantara that the birds on the trees flew away screaming.

Not long after a giant who had been sleeping in the grass rose up and stood before him. He was as tall as a fir-tree, and cried out to the drummer: 'You wretched imp! what do you mean by waking people up out of their best sleep with your horrid drum?'

'I drummed to the many thousands who are following me to show the way.'

'What do they want here in my wood?' asked the giant.

'Well, they wish to free the forest from such monsters as you are!'

'Oho!' cried the giant, 'why, I could crush you beneath my foot as I would crush an ant!'

'Don't suppose you can do anything against them,' cried the drummer. 'If you were to stoop down to catch hold of one of us, he would jump away and hide himself, and when you were lying down to sleep, his people would come from every bush and thicket, each carrying a steel hammer in his girdle. They would creep cautiously upon you, and soon with their hammers beat out your brains!'

This assertion made the giant rather uneasy. 'If I meddle with these cunning little people,' he thought, 'they can, no doubt, do me some mischief. I can easily strangle wolves and bears, but I cannot defend myself against these earth-worms.'

'Listen, little man,' he said; 'I pledge myself that you and your companions shall for the future be left in peace; and now tell me what you wish, for I am quite ready to do your pleasure.'

'You have long legs,' said the drummer, 'so that you can run more swiftly than I can. Carry me to the glass mountain, and I will give a sign to my people to retire and leave you in peace.'

'Come here, worm,' said the giant; 'seat yourself on my shoulders, and I will carry you wherever you wish.'

The giant then lifted him up, and the drummer soon began to play away on his drum to his heart's content. The giant thought this must be a sign to the rest of the little people to retire.

After awhile a second giant made his appearance, and he took the drummer from the first, and stuck him in the button-hole of his coat. The drummer seized the button, which was as large as a dish, and holding fast by it, looked about him quite contentedly. Presently came a third, who took him from the button hole, and placed him on the brim of his hat, from which elevation he could look over the tree-tops, and as he saw in the blue distance a mountain, 'Ah,' thought he, 'that is certainly the glass mountain;' and so it was.

The giant, after a few more steps, reached the foot of the mountain, and then he lifted the drummer to the ground. The little man wished to be carried to the top of the mountain, but the giant shook his head, murmured something in his beard, and went back to the wood.

There stood the poor little drummer at the foot of the mountain, which looked as high above him as if three mountains had been placed one upon another. The sides were as slippery as a mirror, and there seemed no possible means of reaching the top. He began to climb, but he slid backwards at every step.

'If I were a bird, now!' he said to himself; but what was the use of wishing? no wings grew for him.

While he thus stood, not knowing how to help himself, he saw at a little distance two men struggling together. He went up to them, and found that they were quarrelling about a saddle which lay on the ground between them, and which they each wished to have.

'What fools you must be,' he cried, 'to want a saddle when you have not a horse to place it upon!'

'This saddle is worth a contest,' said one of the men, 'for whoever seats himself upon it, and wishes himself somewhere, even were it to the end of the world, he would have his wish accomplished the moment it was uttered!'

'The saddle is our joint property, and it is my turn to ride it; but my companion will not let me,' rejoined the other.

'I will soon put an end to this contention,' said the drummer. He then went to a little distance, and stuck a white staff in the ground; then he came back, and said: 'Now run to the mark, and whoever is there first is to ride first.'

They both started off at a full trot; but scarcely had they taken two steps when the drummer swung himself on the saddle, and wished to be on the top of the mountain, and ere a man could turn his hand there he was.

The top of the mountain formed a plain, on which stood an old stone-built house; in front of it a large fish-pond, and behind it a dark forest. Neither man nor animals could be seen; not a sound disturbed the peaceful stillness, excepting the wind rustling the leaves, while the clouds floated silently overhead.

He stepped up to the door and knocked. When he had knocked a third time the door was opened by an old woman with a brown face and red eyes. She had a pair of spectacles on her long nose, and looked at him very sharply as she asked: 'What is your business here?'

'I want admission, food, and a night's lodging,' he replied.

'All these you shall have,' she replied, 'if you will perform three tasks for me.'

'Willingly,' he replied; 'I do not shrink from work, however difficult it may be.'

The old woman, on this, led him in, gave him a supper, and a good bed in the evening.

Next morning, when he got up, breakfast was ready for him, and after eating it, he expressed his readiness to perform the tasks she had spoken of.

In reply, the old woman took a thimble from her lean finger, and, offering it to him, said: 'Now go, for your first task, and scoop out the water from the fish-pond outside with this thimble, and the work must be finished before night; all the fish, also, that are in the water must be laid together according to their size and species!'

'That is a strange task,' said the drummer. However, he went out to the pond, and commenced his work.

He scooped industriously for the whole morning; but how can a man empty a large quantity of water with only a thimble to dip with at a time? Why, it would occupy a thousand years.

When noontide came, he thought to himself: 'All I am doing is quite useless; it will be just the same whether I work or not.' So he gave it up, and seated himself.

Presently he saw a young maiden coming towards him from the house. She had a basket in her hand containing some dinner for him, and she said: 'Why are you sitting here and looking so sad? What is the matter?'

He looked up at her, and saw that she was very handsome. 'Ah,' he exclaimed, 'I cannot perform the first task which has been given me, and how shall I succeed with the other two? I have come to seek for a king's daughter who dwells here, but I have not found her, so I may as well go away.'

'No, stay here,' she replied; 'I will help you out of your trouble. You are tired now, so lay your head in my lap, and go to sleep. When you awake again your work will be done.'

The drummer did not require to be told twice, and, as soon as his eyes were closed, the maiden turned a wish-ring on her finger, and said : 'Water, rise out ; fish, come out.'

In a moment the water rose in the air like a white mist, and floated away to the clouds, while the fish came springing and jumping on the bank, and laid themselves down near each other, each according to its size and species. When the drummer awoke he saw with astonishment that all had been done for him.

The maiden then said : 'One of the fish is lying away from its own species, quite alone. When the old woman comes this evening to see if all is done as she desired, she will ask why that little fish is left out. Then throw it in her face, and say, "That is left for you, old witch !"'

In the evening she came, and when she asked the question he threw the fish in her face. The old woman stood still, and appeared not to notice what he had done, excepting that she looked at him with malicious eyes.

The next morning she said to him : 'The task I gave you yesterday was too easy ; you must have something more difficult to-day. I expect you, therefore, to cut down all the trees of the forest behind this house, to split them into logs and stack them, and when evening comes all must be finished !'

She gave him an axe, a chopper, and two wedges. But the axe was made of lead, and the chopper and wedges of tin, so that when he began his work the axe stuck fast in the wood, and the chopper and wedge struck one against the other, and became useless.

He knew not what to do, but at noon the maiden came again with his dinner and comforted him. 'Lay your head in my lap,' said she, 'and sleep, and when you awake the work will be done.'

While he slept she turned the wish-ring on her finger, and in a moment the whole of the forest trees fell together with a crash. The wood divided itself into logs, and stacked itself in

piles ; it was as if an invisible giant had accomplished the task. When the drummer awoke, the maiden said : ' You see how all the wood is cut down and stacked, except one little bough. When the old woman comes this evening and asks what the bough is left there for, you must give her a blow with it, and say, " It is for you, old witch." '

The old woman came, and when she saw the work all done, she said : ' Ah, it was an easy task I gave you ; but what is that bough left there for ? '

' For you, witch,' he replied, giving her a blow with it. But she appeared not to feel it, laughed scornfully, and said : ' To-morrow you shall place all this wood in a heap, set fire to it, and burn it.'

He was at the forest by daybreak, and began his work of gathering the wood into a heap ; but how was it possible for one man to carry the trees of a whole forest into one spot. The work did not get forwards. The maiden, however, did not forget him in his trouble ; she brought him his mid-day meal, and, when he had eaten, made him lay his head in her lap and sleep. When he awoke the whole stack of wood was burning in one vast flame, the tongues of which reached to the clouds. ' Listen now,' said the maiden ; ' when the witch comes she will give you all sorts of orders. If you perform courageously whatever she desires, she cannot injure you or touch your life. But if you show any fear she will put you in the fire, and you will be consumed. At last, when you have done all she tells you, take her up with both hands and throw her into the flames.'

Then the maiden went away, and presently the witch came sneaking up. ' Ha,' she exclaimed, ' I am so cold, and here is a fire to warm my old bones, and do me good ; but there lies a log that will not burn, just fetch it out for me. If you can do that you are free to go where you will. Now be brisk and do as I tell you.'

The drummer did not hesitate long ; he sprang into the

flames, but they did him no harm, and not even a hair of his head was singed as he drew out the log and placed it before her. Scarcely, however, had it touched the ground, than it was transformed, and the beautiful maiden who had helped him in his trouble stood before him, the silk and gold embroidered clothes she wore proving at once that she was a king's daughter. The old witch laughed spitefully, and said: 'You think you are going to have the princess, but you shan't, I will take care of that;' and she advanced to lay hold of the maiden and carry her away. But the drummer started forward, seized the old witch with both hands, and threw her into the very midst of the flames, which gathered over her as if in joy at being able to consume a witch.

The king's daughter looked earnestly at the drummer, and saw that he was really a handsome youth, and remembered that he had saved her life, and set her free from the witch's spell. So she held out her hand to him, and said: 'You have risked everything for me, therefore I will now do something for you. Promise to be true to me, then shall you be my spouse. I have plenty of riches and possessions which the old witch has accumulated.'

She led him into the house and showed him chests and boxes which were full of treasures. They left the gold and silver, took only the precious stones, and prepared to leave the mountain of glass. Then the drummer said to her: 'Seat yourself with me on my saddle, and we can fly through the air like birds.'

'The old saddle is useless to me,' she said; 'I only require to turn my wish-ring over, and we are at home.'

'All right!' he cried; 'then let us wish ourselves at the gate of my native city.'

In a trice they were there, and then the drummer said: 'I will first go and see my parents and tell them all the news; wait here for me in this field, I will soon return.'

'Ah,' said the king's daughter, 'let me beg of you to be careful

when you arrive; remember to kiss your parents only on the left cheek, otherwise you will forget me and all that has happened, and I shall be left behind in the field alone.'

'How can I ever forget you?' he said, and pledged her with his right hand to return to her very soon.

When he reached his father's house no one knew who he was, he had so changed, for the three days which he had, as he supposed, spent on the mountain, had been really three long years. At last they recognised him, and his parents were so overjoyed at his return that they fell on his neck and embraced him. He was also so moved in his heart that he kissed them on both cheeks, and thought not once of the maiden's words. As soon as he had kissed them on the right cheek all gratitude to the king's laughter vanished from his heart. He turned out his pockets and threw great handfuls of precious stones on the table, his parents wondering how and where he had obtained all these riches.

The father's first act was to build a beautiful castle, around which were gardens, and woods, and meadows, as if a prince had been going to reside in it.

And when it was finished the mother said to her son, 'I have chosen a maiden to be your wife, and in three days the wedding must take place.' The drummer was quite contented to do as his parents wished.

The poor princess stood for a long time outside the town, waiting for the return of the young man. When evening came, she said to herself, 'No doubt he has kissed his parents on the right cheek, and I am quite forgotten.' Her heart was so full of grief that she wished herself in a lonely house, in the wood close by.

Every evening she went into the town, and wandered about the grounds of his father's castle. She saw him many times; but he never saw her; and one day she heard people talking of his marriage, and saying that it would take place the following day. Then she said to herself, 'I will try to win him back again.'

So on the first day of the betrothal she wished for a beautiful dress that should shine as the sun; and when it lay before her it glittered like sunbeams. All the guests were assembled when she entered the room; everyone present was surprised at her beauty and her rich dress; but the drummer did not recognise her among so many, and she had disguised herself. That night, however, when all was still, she placed herself outside his window, and sang,

'Drummer, should I forgotten be?
Was it not I who tended thee,
And to your tasks lent all my aid?
When on the mountain-top we strayed
You freed me from the witch's power,
And swore to love me from that hour:
These riches all were gifts from me;
Then why should I forgotten be?'

But the song was all lost; the young man slept soundly, and heard it not. On the second evening she was again at the festival, and afterwards sang her mournful song outside the window.

But she had mistaken the sleeping-room of her lover, and again her complaints would have been useless, had not the servants of the castle told their young master that they had heard a beautiful voice singing during the night. His curiosity was excited, and he determined to listen at the window himself.

In the night after the third day of the betrothal, when the festivities were over, the young man placed himself at the window to listen; but no sooner had he heard the sound of the voice singing,

'Drummer, should I forgotten be?
Was it not I who tended thee,
And to your tasks lent all my aid?
When on the mountain-top you strayed
You freed me from the witch's power,
And swore to love me from that hour:
Your riches all were gifts from me;
Drummer, should I forgotten be?'

than to his memory everything returned. 'Ah!' he cried, 'how nearly have I lost my true and only love! In the joy of my heart I kissed my parents on the right cheek. There is the fault; but I will atone for my conduct.' He started up, as the song still continued in plaintive accents, rushed out, and exclaimed, 'Forgive me, dearest!' and, as he pressed her to his heart, she forgot her sorrow and forgave him all.

Then he led her to his parents, and said, 'This is the true bride,' and told them what she had done for him, and the cause of his forgetfulness. They were ready to receive her at once as their daughter-in-law, and the other intended bride was made quite contented by being presented with the beautiful dresses which the real bride had worn at the festival.



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